

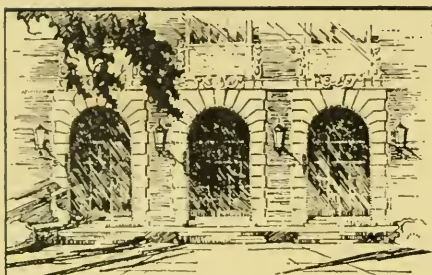
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DAWSON, John W.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF  
OLD TIMES IN FORT  
WAYNE.

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ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY

*Charcoal Sketches  
of Old Times  
in  
Fort Wayne*

*by  
John W. Dawson*







CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF  
OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

*by*

HON. JOHN W. DAWSON

ALENE GODFREY, Editor

Reprinted from the OLD FORT NEWS 1872?  
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1958

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## JOHN W. DAWSON, 1820-1877

John W. Dawson, Fort Wayne lawyer, newspaperman, and politician, was born in Cambridge City, Indiana on October 21, 1820. His elementary education was completed in the public schools of Cambridge City where he lived with his parents before moving to a farm near Guilford, Indiana. In 1838, young Dawson left his father's farm and went to Fort Wayne. He attended school and later became a clerk in the office of Colonel John Spencer, his brother-in-law, who was Receiver of Public Moneys.

After a short trip to Iowa in the spring of 1840, he returned to Indiana and studied for two years at Wabash College. Choosing a legal profession, John read law with his brother-in-law, Thomas Johnson. He remained in Fort Wayne until he was admitted to the bar in 1843 and then began his practice in Augusta. However, on the death of Thomas Johnson, he returned to Fort Wayne to take charge of Johnson's law firm.

In 1847, John Dawson continued his law studies at Transylvania College in Kentucky, but poor health forced him to terminate his studies. Returning to Fort Wayne in 1853, he leased the Fort Wayne TIMES with T. H. Hood. The partnership was of short duration, in the following year Dawson became the sole owner. The DAWSON TIMES held progressive views on many current issues of the day, but was conservative on the controversial slavery problem. The paper gained influence, and its editor entered the political arena. Although nominated for the office of Secretary of State by the People's Party, Dawson failed to win the election. On November 4, 1855, John Dawson and Amanda M. Thorton were married in the Second Presbyterian Church.

Shortly after Lincoln's inauguration, John W. Dawson was appointed Governor of the Utah Territory. His term of office was short-lived, however; six months after his arrival in Salt Lake City he was the victim of a violent physical attack. False rumor, his personal temperament, and Mormon opposition to the Federal policy of abolition of polygamy were all factors resulting in the attack. Dawson returned to Fort Wayne, but never completely recovered from the effects of the unfortunate incident. He died September 10, 1877.

## FOREWORD

The following articles titled CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE were published in the Fort Wayne DAILY SENTINEL by John W. Dawson in the year 1872. Except for the omission of number X and minor deletions throughout most of the other articles, they are reproduced as Mr. Dawson first published them.

Mr. Dawson obviously was a very temperate man. He apparently never ceased nor slackened in his denunciation of the use of rum. His frequent references to the "Black Beast" of intemperance and the "blighting mildew of inebriety" reflect his personal attitude toward the use of liquor. Although there may be much truth in what he has to say relative to the use of strong drink, his personal opinions and observations do not seem relevant nor pertinent to the general reader of articles of this nature. This, as well as his frequent and somewhat lengthy quotations from the Bible and literature, accounts for the aforementioned deletions throughout his sketches and the omission of article X.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES have been presented as Mr. Dawson wrote them, although, some of the facts are not in complete agreement with the writings of other early Fort Wayne historians.

ALENE GODFREY, Editor

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CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Friday, March 8, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

By John W. Dawson

Many subjects of interest are presented when we push time back a third of a century and glance at the place where we lived during that period. The men who appeared on the stage of action were outstanding. The business, social conditions, political events, physical aspects of the country--its settlement and general improvement--all add distinction to a place.

On March 6, 1838 I took up my residence in Fort Wayne. I was a youth of eighteen and a half years--with less than five dollars in my pocket --fresh from the farm on which I was born, in a Southern county of the State. I had industrious habits, good raising, and a fair rudimental education in the English studies. On that day I commenced to "do for myself." Like many young men, I was entranced with the beauties of the world, and beguiled by them. I thought I was much more master of the situation than I really was. Time has corrected many of those joyous and sanguine hopes. The emotions of that day were quite in advance of my judgment, and I have lived to find those emotions give way to the maturity of sober judgment, and happy dreams to sad and bitter realities. This, however, is the experience of all men. These pleasant dreams go from us unwittingly, and we never find anything in life to compensate for them.

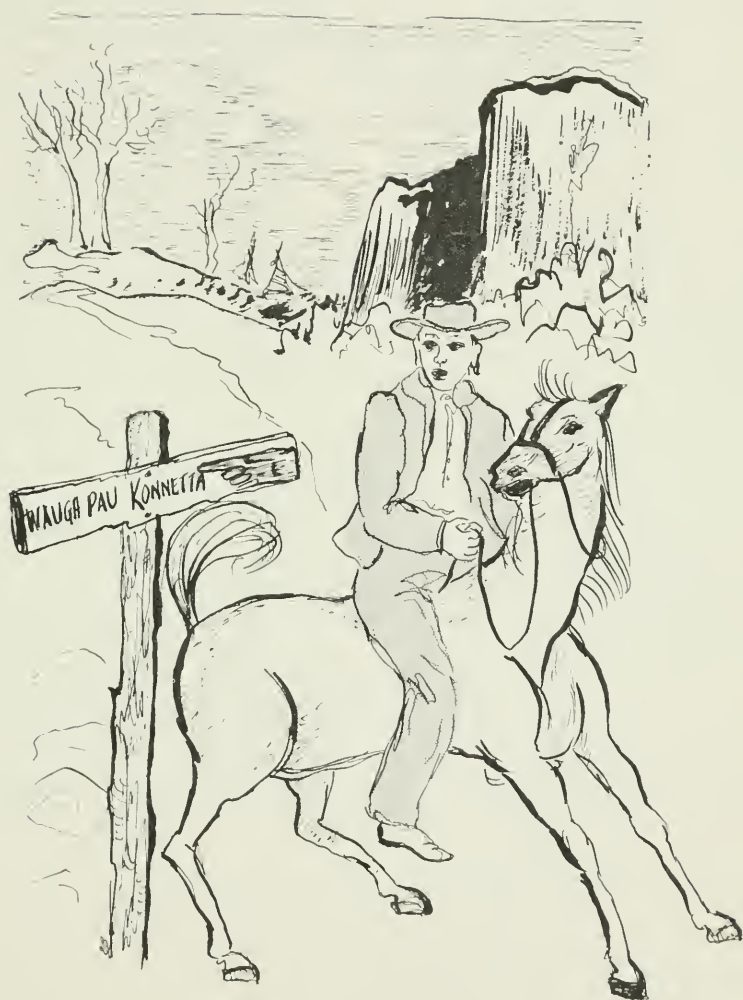
On that day, now thirty-four years ago, I arrived here. It may be well to give the physical aspect of the country and some details from the time I left Piqua, Ohio, en route, on the first Sunday of March, 1838. Leaving Troy, Miami County, Ohio, I soon reached Piqua, which was the frontier town of northwest Ohio--the head of canal navigation and a place of much business importance. It was through this place that all the commerce from Dayton was carried to Fort Wayne. From it a tri-weekly mail was carried to Fort Wayne on horseback, reaching the post Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The winter had been one of an unusual fall of snow. It had been good sleighing for a month before I left Dearborn County, and remained good till about the middle of March. It was only during good sleighing that teamsters, pleasure seekers, and friends, could rapidly travel over the road to Fort Wayne. It was now used very largely for these purposes.

I was on horseback and my outfit, as usual then, was contained in a pair of portmanteau. I had read much, and heard more of the Indian character--their warfare and barbarity. The region from Piqua to Fort Wayne had been famous ground for warlike incidents--Indian treaties and thrilling stories. Having never before been twenty-five miles from home, nor even slept three consecutive nights away, I naturally felt a great ti-

March 8, 1872

midity in entering on this "bloody ground." Even a name terrified me. I quaked on reaching the forks of the road, three miles this side of Piqua, at the foot of a bluff, where Colonel John Johnson's farm was situated, when I saw a hand with the forefinger pointing to the north, and before it, painted in capitals, the letters Waugh pau Konnetta. That savage name must certainly be the very jaws of death, and I at the point of entering in! This town now has been toned down by civilization to Wapakoneta, the seat of justice of Auglaize County. As I left the guideboard behind, every thing I saw--the woods, rude houses, the streams as nature had adorned them--tended to inspire fear. Even the old double-log tavern, called the "Eight-Mile House," with its huge signboard and device of a buck's head and huge antlers, quite in keeping with the natural aspects of the country. This "Eight-Mile House" stood just where the Bellefontaine railway crosses the turnpike--then a corduroy road. Just ahead at the second crossing of the Laramie was historic ground that had been so for nearly a century. It was once called Laramie's Store, or brick-house (now a town named Berlin), and referred to as a point designating the boundary line, both in a treaty at Fort Harmar, on the Ohio River, January 21, 1785--again in a very distinguished manner referred to as the boundary of lands eastward thereof, treated for by General Wayne on the part of the United States, and the Wyandotts, Shawnees, Ottawas, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel River and other tribes of Indians, concluded at Greenville, Ohio, August 3, 1795. A portage, or right of transportation, was allowed by the Indians to the people of the United States, by land or water, from this point at Laramie's Store, to the St. Mary's River, thence down to Fort Wayne, and thence by the Maumee to Lake Erie, and from the same place a portage across to Auglaize, down it to the Maumee, at Fort Defiance, thence to the Lake, and again from the same place to the Sandusky River. The Indians here reserved six miles square. It was therefore, a noted place, though the rude hewn-log house and surrounding trading houses stood there in 1838, there were no Indians. The place had been cleared very early of its timber, and outside the limits of the arable land then used, the new undergrowth told plainly that the ax was then no longer used. A gentleman named Farrow had lived long at this point and his name will recall to many pioneers the times in which he lived there. To young men who were attracted by "calico," it was a perfect haven of rest, for the Misses Farrows' personal charms were certainly not to be depreciated by any one.

A good dinner at Laramie's old store--then kept by a Mr. Defreed who had lately married one of the Farrows--gave the rider and horse fresh courage to push on towards St. Mary's (then the seat of justice of Mercer County). It was celebrated for its Indian treaties in 1818, at which all the country south of the Wabash up to the mouth of Little River, to its head, and the six miles square at Fort Wayne, reserved by the Indians in the Treaty of Greenville--was then purchased from the Indians. This Treaty of October 1818, was made by General Lewis Cass--then Governor of Michigan Territory--and Governor Jennings of Indiana, on the part of the United States and the Indians by their chiefs. This purchase included all



. . . even a name will terrify . . .



March 8, 1872

the central part of Indiana--and was surveyed about 1819--after which settlement flowed in. The Legislature in 1819 organized the most of this territory into counties, and having fixed the boundaries of Randolph County, as it is now; all to the north not then being organized attached it to Randolph for Civil purposes. It was in August 1820 that the Board of Justices (County Commissioners) of Randolph County, erected all the Territory north of Randolph to the Michigan line, into a township, and named it "Wayne Township," and at the same time fixed a place of holding the election at the house of Dr. William Turner at this place, now the city of Fort Wayne--hence the name of Wayne Township, Allen County.



## CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Monday, March 11, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

By Hon. John W. Dawson

Coming back from my description let me proceed from Laramie's Store to St. Mary's. The country between those points was extremely low. A little colony of German Catholics had settled in the swamp, and laid off a town, which was then known by the name Stalltown, in honor of their pastor, who soon after died of the cholera. It was a hard-looking place. A string of rude log houses along either side of the road seemed in the water, and much lower than the road which had been laid with logs transversely with a little dirt thrown on them. These people wore wooden shoes --women with stuffed caps and short quilted petticoats--sent my mind back to New Amsterdam, (New York), two hundred years before, to the days of the Von Runkles and Von Twillers. To me it was a new order of things. I could find no one to understand my English, nor could I understand their German. Verily I thought I had got into Germany. I followed the road--I could do that in English--hoping to find some one with whom I could converse. This place is now Bremen, one of the best parts of Shelby County, Ohio. It was night when I passed that celebrated stopping place--"Hathorne's" two miles to the southeast of St. Mary's. This landlord "Jonny Hathorne" was a wild Irishman, a teamster, and noted for his hospitality. His name, like his place and home, has lost its distinction. He is dead. His good wife also is, and of his children I know nothing except the wife of Philip C. Cooke, residing in Washington Township.

Reaching St. Mary's, I found the best "Inn" of the place. A set of jovial rustics were congregated there, some of whom seemed of excellent antecedents. Among these Colonel Pickerel subjected me to a rigid examination and found who my kindred were in Fort Wayne. Later he was of much service to me.

It is not out of place here to say, that though the old-fashioned taverns--or as the English call them "inns"--are gone out of use; their usefulness is not forgotten by the pioneers . . .

It was this Colonel John Pickerel who imparted to me much valuable information in regard to the men and incidents of the times, as well as to matter relating to the geography of the country. This I have now, at the end of thirty-four years, not forgotten. He, however, died over a quarter of a century ago.

On the morning of March 5, 1838, having left the hamlet of St. Mary's, I passed over the plateau of ground on which it was located--then stripped of all timber, no undergrowth having appeared--and soon entered the wild and forbidding forest just ahead and on the hither side of that ter-

March 11, 1872

rible "Black Swamp," equal in danger to the famed Hyrcanian forest. In five miles the cabin of the widow of a Mr. Wise, was passed, the only house or sign of life between St. Mary's and Bonafield, twelve miles apart. Over this terrible swamp nature had then frozen a splendid bridge. It was to me a great relief, for had I then found it, as I often did afterwards, deep in mud and water, a sea around, in winter ice and frost, and in summer mosquitoes, snakes, etc., and all along covered with evidences of broken vehicles and stalled teams--I say, had I then found it as I did after attrition with the world and the experience of years had driven away much of my boyish fears--I should have retraced my steps. . . But I passed to Bonafield's--now Neptune--and partook of some refreshments with some rustic teamsters who tarried there. I went on, passing Ruel Robuck's, long known as the oasis in the desert, where the weary found rest. I have often passed there since, but though the brook runs by his door and all natural objects are the same, yet the kind Ruel "is not." He sleeps. I soon reached Shane's Prairie, and took an excellent repast at the old, red-frame house, with the host Judge Hays, one of the pioneers of Mercer County. On this prairie and around its margin were some sturdy settlers, and some had done well in worldly goods. It was by Fort Wayners called the "Settlement," as it was for a great many years the first evidence of white civilization to be found southeast of Fort Wayne toward the St. Mary's. On this prairie, some of our old citizens first saw the light of day, and they can tell details. It was called Shane's Prairie from Anthony Chens--pronounced Shane--who was a French Indian, and lived there on the St. Mary's River. He was a great friend of the whites, and while in the battle of River Raisin was enabled to have some certain information as to who it was that killed the great war chief Tecumseh, who fell at that conflict, and whose death broke the Indian combination.

Willshire was soon reached--then the seat of justice of Van Wert County--a town laid off in 1819 by Captain James Riley of Arabian memory, and who there built a mill at a rapid in the river called the "Devil's Race Ground." It was the nucleus of a small settlement, but it was so geographically situated that it has never assumed the consequence which the fertility of the county justified. It was this Captain Riley who surveyed and subdivided all the lands around this city, and part of the county, under contract of the United States. The town was named after Willshire, the friend of Captain Riley, who redeemed him from captivity at Magadore . . .

Passing Willshire, and the old red brick tavern on the north side of the river, then kept by Amos Comptor, who soon afterwards removed here, and is remembered by our old men, I began to look for a place to stop over night. Before I found it, I was about eight miles on the road to Fort Wayne. At a house of a pioneer named Smith, I endured a night. By the hospitality of a lady who, with her husband, was migrating to this region, I did not retire to the floor hungry. On the morrow, taking advantage of the early rising for breakfast, and hoping to find a barber shop, I prepare myself to appear to my brothers and sisters in Fort Wayne in good plight. I was disappointed. That was a paper town--a cabin or two, no barn, no barber

March 11, 1872

shop, "no nothing." Feeding my horse in a sugar kettle, fastened to a stump, I declined to wait for breakfast, and thus move forward with no hopes of a meal until I reached my new home--nor did I get one before.

I shall describe Fort Wayne as I saw it just thirty-four years ago in the next.

# CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

## DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Thursday, March 14, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

By Hon. John W. Dawson

At the close of the preceding narrative I was nearing Fort Wayne, on a fair day March 6, 1838. It was on the "New Piqua Road" over which I traveled. It led out from Calhoun Street directly south one mile, then in a southeasterly direction, and up the north side of the St. Mary's River, on the tableland, as it is now traveled. It was called "New" to distinguish it from the "Old Piqua Road," which followed the road that General Wayne opened on his retiring from this place, in November, 1794, after he had built and named the Fort. That was called "Wayne Trace," and passed out from the Fort just to the west of Judge Hanna's late residence, crossed the "Five Mile Prairie" where the present road crosses it, and crossing Merriams' Creek, near where Judge Coleman lived, passed, as near as I can now recollect, about where the village of Massillon now stands, in Madison Township. It did not touch the St. Mary's River until it reached Shane's Crossing, where a stockade called Fort Adams once stood.

The country along this New Piqua Road was settled very little, and was regarded--that is the tableland--as exceedingly thin, promising very little return to the farmers. Time has shown what industry can do to aid practical agriculture. A few settlers were there, and I think I can name most of them; Philo Whitcomb, just east of where Middletown is now; Jesse Heaton, and Nelson McLain, to the west a short distance from the same village. A small German settlement at or near where Hesse Cassel is now, and a family or two at Merriams' Creek, or "Eight Mile"--a creek which should not lose its proper name--taken from a very worthy family who settled there over forty years ago; a family or two about four miles out, and one or two nearer town.

The first glimpse of Fort Wayne was had from an elevated part of the road, about one hundred twenty rods south of the Railway depot. The spire of the old Court House, and that of the old Catholic Church which stood where the Cathedral now is built, were seen. All other buildings were hidden from view by the high ground yet to be noticed at the intersection of Douglas Avenue with Calhoun Street. There was scarcely a house south of Lewis Street. What few there were could only be called cabins hid in deep woods, save the Brackenridge house, as it stands yet, and an old frame back from the southwest corner of Lewis and Calhoun in which Colonel Spencer lived for many years. All was wild, save a few small fields of the Hamilton property.

Before proceeding to sketch incidents of more general interest, I shall, for the especial notice of the old settlers of Fort Wayne and Allen County first give a sketch of the town as it appeared then. This is sug-

gested by a "Bird's-eye view," taken by Mr. Palmetery in 1854, and which many now have in frame--to preserve the memory of the place as it was then. Mine will be merely descriptive of the place as it was sixteen years before that. These will show, when compared with the present aspect of the city, how rapid has been our advance, from a hamlet of less than two thousand people, governed by a Board of Trustees, and giving a vote including the township of Wayne, not exceeding three hundred.

This old Catholic Church, and the pastor's house just behind it, was all the improvement then on the Church property. The Church was not completed for want of funds. Here I cannot forget to make honorable mention of two gentlemen, long since dead, whose munificence toward the Church was great. These gentlemen were Captain John B. Bourie and Mr. Francis Comparet . . .

On neither side of Calhoun Street, from this church to the north side of Wayne, was there a house. A post-and-rail-fence, open at many places, ran on the west side of Calhoun from Lewis to Wayne. The year before, it had been the east boundary of a cultivated field, the western boundary of which was Shawnee Run, which took its rise out about where the Bass Foundry now is, and drained all that region, as also that region known as the additions of Lewis, Hamilton, Baker, Wilt, Brackenridge, Ewing's Grove and Spencer. Then it entered the old town plat near the corner of Spencer's Addition, passed obliquely to the northeast until it crossed Berry Street at the intersection of Harrison; then down it, and under the canal basin into the St. Mary's River at Lee's Ford, where the Bloomingdale bridge crosses. It is the unfortunate toleration of the obstruction of this natural outlet of the surface water of this run, which now has caused the necessity for an immense sewer from Lewis Street, under Clay Street, to the Maumee River, to discharge what otherwise would have gone along the natural channel without damage to property. From Lewis on the south to Wayne on the north, on both sides, was called Hanna's Addition, but shortly before that was laid out. There were no buildings in the western part of this addition, save one, which was on the west margin of the Run, where Jefferson Street crosses it. The eastern part of this addition having been very early stripped of its timber for building the Fort, and for other purposes later, was little fitted for agriculture. At the date of platting, it was covered with a thick undergrowth of white oak. The parts occupied by streets having been chopped off high stumps, many of them were left to interrupt safe and speedy travel. Perhaps there were a half-dozen small houses then lately built at different parts of this addition east. Its distance then, from the business part of town, seemed to offer more reasons against eligibility for building sites than anything else; but in later years, the extreme hardness of the soil--notwithstanding the fine elevation of the ground--has offered much more objection; and this is perhaps the main reason why this part of the city has not improved so rapidly, as the western part--which, though much lower and flatter--is a better and livelier soil.



## CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

## DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Friday, March 15, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

By Hon. John W. Dawson

The town of Fort Wayne was then almost entirely embraced in the space occupied by the Old Plat, consisting of 118 lots (and was located on the north fraction of southeast quarter of Section 2, Township 30, North Range 12 East. It was laid off by Barr and McCorkle, original purchasers, in May 1824. The "County Addition" was laid off in 1830. The western twenty acres of the original forty acres, Military Reservation--which twenty acres the Congress of the United States authorized the Associate Judges of Allen County to enter for the county at \$1.25 per acre--and the balance of the forty acres, set apart for Canal land, was bought and laid out into forty lots and called Taber's Addition. On this last addition there were not a half-dozen houses. The remaining part of the town as platted was mostly on paper. There were not a dozen houses in it. It was called for many years "Ewingtown," being Ewing's Addition on the west half of southwest quarter of Section 2, township and range above named.

The few houses in Ewingtown were in the thicket; Dr. Lewis Beecher's, Captain Ben Smith's, and Colonel Alexander Ewing's old house as it now stands at the canal bridge on Ewing Street. A plain old-fashioned wooden paling marked the place where his remains were interred just east of the house in the swamp. A large unfinished dilapidated Methodist Church stood near the corner of Ewing and Main streets.

What is now Rockhill's Addition was then a cultivated field, owned by 'Squire Rockhill. He lived then in a small house on the south bank of the Wabash and Erie Canal, just north of where the Rockhill House is now.

Thus it will be seen that the space bounded on the north by Water Street, east by Lafayette Street, south by Wayne Street, west by Harrison Street--sixteen squares--constituted Fort Wayne as a wooden town. The buildings were of an inferior sort, unpainted, generally one-story high, some of logs, more of frame work, just five of brick, the streets bad, many lots destroyed by standing water, and well-water on Columbia Street not very palatable. Nearly all the trading was done at the east end of Columbia Street. However, Captain Bourle and John B. Peltier had a fine store northwest of Calhoun and Columbia streets; Taylor, Freeman & Company, another on the northwest corner; Captain Ben Smith, a grocery, as then called--a saloon now--on the southeast corner; and on the northeast corner was the old "Mansion House." It was then kept by Colonel Joseph H. McMaken, whose name I mention with pleasure, as he was an honest man, and long an Associate Judge of the Circuit Court. To the west of the northwest corner, as just designated, on the north side were some few frame dwellings. At the Canal Basin stood the old Masonic Hall, which was then used

March 15, 1872

for dwelling apartments and for the publication of the Fort Wayne SENTINEL, then in its fifth volume. The venerable Thomas Tigar was its editor and proprietor. On the opposite side of the street were the tannery of Paige & Fry, the "Franklin House," kept by Mills & Taylor, and the residence of Francis Comparet, the spot where the American House now stands.

I will only mention a few places on Columbia Street. Going east from the Mansion House corner, was a grocery, kept, I think, by William Henderson, where Mr. Henry Sharp lately had a hat shop, and a large brick house on the alley, called the "Post House," after the owner, James Post, long since dead. Across the alley, John E. Hill kept a dry goods store, where is now Morgan & Beach's splendid building. Next, in a low frame, Captain Henry Rudisill, now deceased, kept the Post Office, where the venerable Captain Oliver Fairfield, now of Decatur, was a faithful clerk, tying the twine and saving the scraps of paper quite in contrast with the economy of office clerks of this day. Next door Dr. Merchant W. Huxford kept a drugstore, and a good one, too. On the corner below, was the long established trading house of Allen Hamilton & Company, the firm being Allen H., Cyrus Taber and Thomas Hamilton, the latter only surviving. On the corner east was then being built Barnett and Hamm's big brick, which was soon finished, and was the largest building then in northern Indiana, a building which served for a court house, clerk's office, law offices, and printing offices, for years. The latter until it was burnt, in March 1860, and in which was consumed the TIMES office which I then owned, edited and published. The little brick now at the side of the new building, which was built on the same site, was then standing as it does now. It was the residence of William H. Coombs, Esq., then a young lawyer, and still here in the practice. He and one other survive those who then were resident practitioners. A few unimportant buildings from that to the corner, east, where Barnett and Hanna had a trading house, and did a large business. Among the business omitted in this space, was the firm of Wright and Dubois. On the opposite corner east, was a long log building, called the Suttentfield House, after the distinguished Colonel William Suttentfield. At the canal basin was a boatyard, where all the boatbuilding of this region was done by James W. Deneal. Then or soon after, he had in his employ, a gentleman noted for his fiddleistic talent, and who a few years later turning up, on the Pacific coast, became Governor of Oregon, Captain John W. Whitaker. From this boatyard the common road ran down along the canal and across the old Fort ground, between the old well and the only building of the Fort then standing. This building stood on the west side of the vacant ground, as it stands now, and was two-story, and had been changed from a shed to a conical roof. It had been originally used for officers' quarters. A broken pole stood in the centre of the parade ground, on which the Federal flag had originally been hoisted. The pickets which had enclosed the ground had nearly all been removed, yet the line where they stood was marked. A post of the gateway at the southwest corner of the stockade just behind the present residence of O. W. Jefferds, on the alley between Berry and Wayne streets--was standing. These pickets and the logs which had com-

March 15, 1872

posed the other buildings within the pickets, had all been removed by people for building purposes. This perhaps would not have been, had not the ground and buildings been invaded by the location and construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal--which from the basin at Comparet's warehouse westward to Logansport, had been completed for a couple of years. The eastern part was then in the process of construction, and was not completed to Toledo till five years later.



## CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

## DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Saturday, March 16, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

In continuation of my "Charcoal Sketches," I will begin standing on the parade ground of the "old Fort," on the morning of March 7, 1838, where I was invited to go by my brother, Honorable Reuben J. Dawson, who, from a residence of six years then past, was enabled, from information derived from living witnesses and from other accurate sources, to impart to me much information relative to places of note, and natural objects around hereabouts.

Looking to the east, the stream of the Maumee River lay below, and could be seen locked up in ice for three-fourths of a mile. It was this stretch of the stream which the guns on the bastion at the southeast corner of the Fort were intended to command against the approach of the enemy by that river. The ford where General Harmar's army crossed, on October 17, 1790, and the ground where, on the 22nd following, the disastrous battle took place between the forces under him and the Indians, led by the famous war chief "Little Turtle," called "Harmar's Defeat," was pointed out. This was the exact point between Maumee and St. Joseph, where the "Omee Towns" were situated, which were burnt at the approach of the army. Through this very spot the Maumee Avenue Turnpike now runs.

The "Old Apple Tree" standing in the centre of the ground of conflict, was then pointed out to me. Of it I had read some, but heard more. I was then in sight of the old tree itself, which had been planted so long before that Time seemed old. It was old when the fall of Quebec decided the alternations between two different civilizations which had for more than a century been carried on, and from that day when the French flag ceased to float on the Heights of Abraham, it rightfully ceased to be unfurled at this point. That of the British succeeded, and again in time the American. So this old tree has been subject to the flags of three nations. It was old when were heard the sound of the guns and the clash of the war club that put to death the little English garrison near by, which fell by French treachery in May, 1763, during Pontiac's conspiracy. It was a fruitbearing patriarch when the American Revolution gave such an unparalleled impetus to Anglo American supremacy. It was old when its roots were bathed by the blood of our fallen soldiers at Harmar's Defeat, and when "Fort Wayne" was built. Its branches were distinguished for their greatness in 1812, when General Harrison raised the siege and relieved the imperiled garrison, and its trunk then measured nine feet in circumference. For fifty years the plowshare invigorated its growth, and it gave forth its annual fruit for more than a century and a quarter. It has seen Indian orgies when human victims were roasted and eaten at its base. There they had their Moloch, and

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with these sacrifices they appeased this heathen God. It saw the Miamis reach their zenith, and adopting the habits of the whites they fell from their estate. A hundred and fifteen years after it was planted, the remnant of this tribe was pushed before the tide of civilization, westward of the Missouri. After all these changes and when a city of 20,000 inhabitants had grown at its foot, it refused to blossom in the springtime. The trunk and barren boughs fell from the canker of age. Its stump may yet be seen but soon no vestige will be left. I know of no representation of it extant, save that taken by Benson J. Lossing, the historian, who while I was editing the TIMES, some nine years ago, took some notes from me, and made a crayon sketch which I think is in his late published book.

To the north of the Fort, the junction of the St. Mary's and St. Joseph was seen. The neck of ground at that point pushed down more than two feet below where the waters now unite. The ground in the junction seemed in better view than now, as then the whole margin of the river was cleared of brush and trees, and the bottom land under good cultivation, as I found, at seed time.

The Maumee was then crossed at a ford which entered the river from the town side, just above the present bridge, and passed out by an easy exit just below where the east end of the bridge stands. Large stones stood prominently in the river, and offered much obstruction to travel, when they were hidden by water. The ground in the bend of the river St. Mary's, was very nearly clear of undergrowth, and presented the appearance of a cultivated field, without the ordinary fence enclosing it. To the east and south, beyond the picket lines of the Fort, the country looked comparatively wild--that is, early stripped of its timber. The earth had sent up a thick growth of white oak, then about twelve or fifteen feet high, and occasionally a wagon road wound among it. The only house seen at the south, that I recollect, was a small frame "inn," built on the northeast corner of Clay and Wayne streets, kept by Henry Dahman, where Mr. Henry Monning now lives. The only house seen to the east was one now owned by John Burt's estate, near the northwest corner of Wagner and Hanna streets, on the line of Taber's Addition, where William L. Moon lived. Passing now up the St. Mary's from the Fort, we reach the French part of the town, then of log buildings, at the exact point and vicinity of the Fort Wayne Gas Works. Among these was a German-Frenchman, named George Fallo, who kept a brewery just on the spot where the southwest corner of the enclosure of the Gas Works is. He was the first brewer here and though the manner of his fermenting his beer was questionable, still old George's beer was in great demand. It was at this point on the St. Mary's River where the road crossed. All the boats landed just above the crossing for years. They brought goods, provisions, and stores down the river in the spring flood of water--the last convoy of which arrived here the very spring that I write of. I saw this.

From this point along up Water Street, were only a few unimportant houses until Calhoun Street was reached. These stood on the bank of Duck Creek--or the "slough" into which the tailrace of the City Mills discharges.

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Captain John B. Bourie lived in the old frame house now standing at the north end of Calhoun Street bridge. A two-story log was on the north corner, and on the ground just north of J. C. Bowser & Company's Foundry as it now is--was an old, brick schoolhouse and cemetery surrounding it, with rude palings and other plain marks of affection around the graves of the buried pioneers. At the crossing of the river, just below the south end of the Bloomingdale bridge, was a low log cabin in which lived widow Lee, from whom the ford took its name. The main road north from the town led out along Calhoun Street, and crossed the St. Mary's on a wooden toll bridge, the feet of the wooden piers or bents, of which, may yet be seen there. The north end of the bridge is where the Mongoquinong Road led due north on the present west line of the City Park property, till it touched the Canal, then to the right, crossing Spy Run and intersecting the other road that crossed at the "boat landing" at John's mill, (now Rudisill's). From the same point the Goshen Road led to the northwest, striking the Feeder Canal at Hinton's--"Bull's Head Inn," just where the steam mill stands. From the point where the Goshen Road deflects to the west of a north and south line, half of a mile from "Bull's Head Inn," the Lima Road was afterwards laid out and crossing Spy Run at Johnny Archers, intersected the Mongoquinong Road at the point where the Lima Plank Road, and the Fort Wayne and Piqua Plank Road once had a tollgate, or at least where the former had, where now Mr. C. Schultz lives and owns. I give this to mark the distinction between the two roads. They are often confounded, though they lead to one place--Mongoquinong Prairie. The road so named had an existence prior to the time that the town of Lima was laid out. Later the new part was called the Lima Road, and the whole was changed from Mongoquinong to Lima.

Coming back to town, the Canal was then in operation. Behind the buildings which front on Columbia Street was a space between them and the water which was called "the Dock." There all the boats landed, received, and discharged freight and passengers. People resorted to "the Dock" for pleasure and business. The boathorn announced the arrival and departure of the packets, and was a sweet sound to us who were so locked in by swamps and distances.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Wednesday, March 20, 1872

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By Hon. John W. Dawson

(Erratum--In sketch #II I stated that Tecumseh fell at the River Raisin; it should have been Thames.)

Bringing the reader back to the old Fort, at which point I was standing in imagination when the last sketch was taken, he will face to the west and southwest. Here lies before us the County Addition to the town of Fort Wayne in the foreground, then considered the most desirable part of the city. The square of ground immediately south of the Fort, where Judge Carson, Mr. Frederick Beach and others live, was then a greensward, and not a house, nor even a sprout of undergrowth was on it. A part of it had once been used for a burial place for persons deceased at the Fort. The square to the immediate west had only three houses on it; one on the corner, where now is the "Big Sycamore"--then a sapling, not over six inches in diameter--another midway between that and the Fort, and a third on the Canal, where Comparet's Steam Mill is. This square was used for garden purposes for the officers of the Fort, and is said to have been filled with all the usual vegetable growth, as well as with flowers of the choicest kinds, and so arranged and cultivated as to excite the liveliest wonder of all who beheld it. Indeed, the soil of that part of the city was unsurpassed for fertility.

The square to the west of this, between Lafayette and Barr streets, was pretty well covered with wooden buildings of an inferior sort--among which was the Council House, fronting on Main Street, and built by the United States at a very early period. It was used by the Indian agents and by Indian Commissioners, the Governor of the Territory and other officials, in which to confer and counsel with the Indian tribes of the North and West. It was of hewn logs, of good size, two-stories high, and well secured against violence from without. It remained standing for years after the period of which I write, and stood on the exact spot where Mr. Michael Hedekin now lives--lot 32; and the well used for public purposes still is open, and used, and gives forth an abundance of pure, cold water. On the north, fronting on Columbia Street, from Lafayette to the corner of Barr, was a row of shanties, mostly inhabited by Irish canallers. The west corner of the same square, was occupied by a large building, and was used by Lane & Stevens. The square south of this, between Berry and Main, was but partially built upon--in fact, only a part was eligible, owing to a small run that passed through it, making it quite wet. The greater part of the buildings fronted on Berry Street. Among the most notable, was the house now occupied by Mr. Jesse R. Straughn, then new, and lately before built



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and occupied by Counsellor Henry Cooper, and the square of a log building standing to the second story, and built of logs from the Fort to the east, next lot to the corner. It was afterwards weather-boarded by Captain Daniel Reid, roofed, lathed and plastered, and occupied by him as a residence. I mention that it is on lot 53, County Addition, so that when it is torn down, the logs may be known as relics as a part of the new Fort which supplanted the old one in 1814, or thereabouts.

On the square to the south of this--that is fronting on Berry Street --the houses are as they were then built, save a brick next the market square, and the old First Presbyterian Church, on the vacant lot 63, next to the corner of Berry and Lafayette streets, now torn down. However, all the front tier of these lots on Berry are part in the County Addition and part in Taber's. This Church was in charge of the Reverend Alexander T. Rankin, then a young man of talent, whom I saw here but a year or so ago. The basement of the building was then occupied by Reverend W. W. Stevens, and Alexander McJunkin as a schoolroom, and under whose tuition I put myself within a few weeks after my arrival. Here was then the youth of the town assembled, to be prepared for the active duties of life--but Stevens and McJunkin and by far the larger part of their pupils are dead . . .

Going along west, we see an old and small frame building, the "market house," in market space, a few miserable frame shanties facing it on the west. On the northwest corner of Barr and Lafayette streets, Judge Hanna lived in palatial style, in the old frame now next the Rink. Mr. J. C. Bowser, in the same house in which he now lives, on the south side, and Squire Robert Hood next to him, a genius of whom many rich anecdotes remain to be told. Where the First Presbyterian Church is, a two-story log house was, and the same kind of a one where Dr. Knapp's new office is, on the opposite corner. Opposite these where the Rink, and Miller, Hattersly, and Fee, Greible occupy what was a swamp, deep and impassable, full of willow and water-growth, offensive and dangerous to health. A few more unimportant buildings were on that square, ending where the Aveline House is now. I mention names to show what havoc death has made: John Majors, carpenter; Abner Gerrard, ex-sheriff; Moses Yerlan, gunsmith; Widow Minnie and others, lived along there. Barnett's corner, opposite the Aveline House, was occupied by a large, two-story log house, tenanted by the venerable John P. Hedges, who yet survives; and west of this--that "honest man," long since deceased, Captain James Barnett, who swore not but answered "by Hedge's Mollie," when in a ruffled temper. At the opposite corner, (McDougall's) now Masonic Hall, was a long row of one-story, shed roof shanties, painted yellow, and in a connected and continuous line fronting on Calhoun 50 feet, and on Berry 170, called "Work's Row," in name of Henry Work, who built and rented them. This row was tenanted by very plain people, and not a few very rough ones--among these, "Old Johnny McDougall," who lately died at the hospital. He was come from "decent people" in Philadelphia; but owing to some domestic reverses in early life, he sought in the solitude of the West, "a medicine for a troubled mind." He was a tailor of President Jefferson's time, and

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here followed his trade, alternately with whisky-drinking, until the town got large. Over twenty-five years ago, he went into the wilds of Jefferson Township, and lived a hermit until the decrepitude of age compelled him to seek those comforts of body from others, which he was at last powerless to render to himself. Still he subsisted himself and died no pauper. This be to his credit--he was an honest man. West of these shanties was the carpenter shop of John Rhinehart, deceased long ago.

A few old buildings, one of frame, where the Post Office is, and south another or two stood on Court Street. An old and good well, a little west of the centre of the street, opposite the southeast corner of the new Court House, was marked by its rude curb--a section of a hollow sycamore tree--and the water drawn therefrom by an old-fashioned sweep in a tree fork. Court House square was unenclosed. On the northeast corner was a frame house and office for the Receiver of the Land Office of this land district. This house, Colonel Spencer, Receiver, built on a lease-hold from the county, and there lived for some years. The Court House was a large two-story brick, but was never finished. It was so insecure when I first saw it, that it was not occupied with safety for court purposes. Still several terms of court were held there, and some religious and political meetings were also held in it. This old Court House and the frame built by Colonel Spencer were sold to him by the county for \$300, in the early part of 1843, and were then removed, preparatory to building a common one on the south part of the square. This later gave place to the new one now standing.

The County jail and jailor's house stood on the southwest corner of the square. The house was a low frame attached to the north side of the jail, and fronting on Calhoun Street. The jail was of square, hewn logs, strongly fitted together, two-stories high, stairs on the outside, west, and a high, strong, upright board fence enclosing it, running along Berry and Calhoun streets. It was both unsafe and unhealthy, and was so used to a late period, when the new, and now as worthless, jail was built.

Closing now, for today, the next will close the view of the place as it was; after which there will be introduced matter of a different character, and to citizens of short residence here; perhaps will be more entertaining. I have particularized places and names, to show what ravages time has made. More than seventy-five per cent of all those who lived here and carried on business are dead.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Saturday, March 23, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

By Hon. John W. Dawson

My late sketch ends with a description of the County jail, as it stood in the spring of 1838, and now nearing the close of my sketch of the place as it then appeared, let us imagine ourselves at the northwest corner of the Public square, thirty-four years ago. Looking to the west, is seen on the opposite corner, the residence of Francis D. Lasselle, now deceased. The building now stands back on the alley on Main Street. Just south of Lasselle's was a frame owned by Wilcox's estate, where now is Hamilton's Hall; next on the alley a fine frame residence occupied by the now venerable John E. Hill, then one of the firm of Hill & Fleming, merchants. On the second lot south of the alley, stood a frame house, owned and occupied by Captain William Stewart . . . Next this, an old frame, the residence and bakery of Joshua Housman, long ago dead. This joined "Work's Row" before noted. Looking west, is seen near the northeast corner of Harrison and Main a few small shanties, among which was the pottery of Reverend Stephen R. Ball of the Methodist Church; just to the east of which was a common frame, the residence of Honorable Charles W. Ewing, then Circuit Judge . . .

On the northeast corner of Main and Calhoun streets was a frame occupied by Philip C. Cook, blacksmith, who, while I have been writing these sketches, has passed my door, but in the eventide of life, quite unlike he was before the noontide. Between that corner and the next east were several small shanties, and on the corner was the then elegant residence of Honorable Allen Hamilton, now deceased. Going north on the west side of Calhoun to Main, there was an only house from the corner to the alley (Pearl), and it unoccupied. From the alley to the corner was owned by William G. and George W. Ewing, and was covered with low frame buildings. In the corner (Keystone Block) was a first class dry goods store, by Philo Taylor, S. C. Freeman and Royal W. Taylor. Just around the corner to the left, on Columbia, was the cabinet shop of Freeman P. Tinkham . . . On the southeast corner of Columbia and Calhoun was a grocery, whisky shop, etc., of Captain Benjamin Smith, who deceased many years afterwards. Coming south we find Lewis Wolke, at the alley, working at the forge--the same Major Lewis Wolke, who owns the fine block in which the SENTINEL is printed. Across the alley was then found Peter Kiser, with saw and knife, steel and scales, dealing out fresh meat to hungry citizens--more jovial then than now.

Going around the corner on Columbia, in a low house were found Tom Moore, the barber, and Burrell Reed, bootblack, town crier and factotum--the only negro in town--the merry, loud-laughing Reed whom all

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knew. Tom was generous, Reed obliging and honest--Tom died a drunkard, and Reed's career in that respect was terminated by being brutally murdered by a boatman many years afterwards. A few lots now going east are in my memory vacant. We now reach the brick residence of Dr. Lewis G. Thompson, standing one lot west of the alley, far back from the street . . . On the alley the drugstore of Thompson & Jefferds--across the alley in a low brick, the Fort Wayne Branch of the State Bank of Indiana, Honorable Hugh McCulloch, President, (now of London) and Mr. W. Hubbell, Cashier, (now of Toledo)--adjoining this was the law office of Thomas Johnson, Esq., the peer of the best man in Indiana--a gentleman by nature, and a distinguished lawyer of application, who in September 1843, fell in the brilliancy of the morning of life . . .

Next to this law office was the Indian trading house of Comparet & Colerick. At the rear of the store was the fur room, and here it was, in the summer of 1838, that a large Indian named "Bob" stabbed "White Raccoon," a tragedy which created much excitement. During his illness, I frequently saw Raccoon, and witnessed a devotion on the part of his Miami squaw wife, which Washington Irving could not sketch truer than he did the wife in his sketch book. It was an affecting sight, and like "a thing of beauty, which is a joy forever," it impressed my young mind so deeply as to be undimmed by the lapse of long and busy years. In fact, since that time while mingling with the world and taking note of its lights, and trying to forget its shadows, I have seen wives, who while deeply conscious of their spiritual relation to every child of God, and polished from the fountains of literature and science, were yet seemingly wanting in the love of that untutored heart which needed a faith and hope that could not be bounded by earthly limits and restraints. But what of "Bob"? Truly, "the way of the transgressor is hard." He lived some years after, but ever in dread of the avenging hand of the friends of Raccoon. I saw him several times thereafter, but always alone. At length the fatal period came, and somewhere down on the Miami Reservation, Bob was decoyed to a spring of water, and while lying down to quench his thirst, the friends of Raccoon, then with him, crushed his head with a stone.

Next to Comparet & Colerick's were some frame houses, and I only recollect the sign of "T. Hoagland, Draper and Tailor" . . . Then came the establishment of Francis D. Lasselle, and on the corner of Columbia and Clinton streets the shop and residence of A. Lintz, shoemaker, and just to the right on Clinton Street, the silversmith shop and residence of Jean Baptiste Bequette, and a few rods below, on the alley, the residence of Captain Dana Columbia, of Canal-boat notoriety. Mr. Madison Sweetser kept an elegant dry goods store on the southeast corner of Columbia and Clinton streets, and just to the east, in a two-story log house, lived Honorable William G. Ewing. It was from the logs of this house that Colonel George W. Ewing took the canes which he presented to the "Old Settlers," at the Rockhill House, July 4, 1860. Hard by was the dry goods store of Sam & William S. Edsall, the tailor shop of Stophlet & Rees, and then a frame building, used as a store. On the alley the law office of Lucien P.





. . . White Raccoon was stabbed . . .

Ferry, Esq., who died amid his usefulness in 1844, and to whom I will also refer hereafter. From that to the corner my memory serves me little, only, that Thomas Pritchard, an excellent English gentleman, kept a restaurant in that space . . . Washington Hall stood on the southwest corner of Barr and Columbia streets, and was the model hotel of Northern Indiana for many years. Here congregated travelers and distinguished men from all parts, as business called them together, and the "Hall" maintained its prestige for many years, until 1839-40, Colonel Spencer, built the American House, on the lot where now is Wagner and Trentman's building, on Calhoun Street, and Francis Rolla built the Lafayette House, the frame part of the now Mayer House. This pioneer enlisted in the volunteer service for the war with Mexico and died at Seralvo, Mexico, about January 1, 1847.

On the southwest corner of Main and Barr there stood as now, a yellow frame building, which has a large history--land officers, canal officers, bankers, civil engineers and many others have lived in it. They who survive are, like the house, dilapidated by time, but they live in palatial style, and would not stable their horses in such a rude building. Customs improve with advancing time, and old things are destroyed to be replaced with better. Next, this was a low log house amid apple trees--where lived the plain old Judy--or Judith Shore . . . Next west of Judy's was the residence of L. G. Bellamy, a plain, blunt shoemaker, generally respected, now dead--and next the cabinet shop of Johnson and John M. Miller has remained ever since. His imposing building, and extensive business furnish a lesson to young men--that perseverance, industry, and integrity will always accomplish great ends.

Here ends my description of Fort Wayne as seen on March 6, 1838. To those who then lived and survive, it probably has an interest, such as early memories always create; and to those who know nothing of what I have written, from actual observation, may perhaps be interested as in any matter which has passed into the history of the place of their residence . . .

Epitome--There were in the town 1838, six lawyers, six preachers of the gospel, eight physicians, four drugstores, about fourteen dry goods stores, a dozen grog-shops, several tin shops, six carpenter and joiner shops, four stone and brick masons, three cabinet shops, six tailors, three wagon makers, two bakeries, one brewer, two saddle shops, one printing office, one fanning mill factory, one jeweler, one potter, one tinner, one banking house, one boat yard, one hatter, three painters, two houses of worship, and six religious societies, one court house, and one jail. Taxable value of real estate in town, \$500,000, and in the county about \$800,000. Population of the city about 2,000.

It was a military post from 1794 to 1819. The town was platted in 1824, incorporated as a town 1829, and chartered as a city 1840. Population 5,000 in 1850; in 1860 about 9,000; and in 1870 about 18,000. Valuation of real and personal property in the city for taxes in 1871, about \$12,000,000; county outside the city about \$7,000,000.

Canal completed from Fort Wayne to Logansport in 1835; to Toledo, 1843; Railway from Pittsburgh here 1854; from Toledo 1856; to Chicago

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1856-57; to Muncie and Cincinnati 1870; to Jackson, Michigan, 1870; to Grand Rapids 1870; to Richmond, Indiana, 1871.

The social aspect of the town will be considered in a short Supplement, in my next, and may be considered as an accompaniment of the preceding view of the town of Fort Wayne.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Monday, March 25, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5

The Social Aspect of Fort Wayne, 1838

By Hon. John W. Dawson

The society of the town of Fort Wayne was, at the time of which I write, limited. By society I mean those who were not of the canaille, and between whom and the latter was observed that distance so necessary at all times to give that pre-eminence which mental and moral accomplishments always attain in a well-regulated and refined community. The punctilio which had attained from long military domination, had so impressed society, the politeness which the French population had infused into it, and the unaffected hospitality which early privations had made a necessity among the citizens, gave to it not only a high and refined tone, but a character for generosity which made it appreciated at home as well as distinguished abroad.

Our citizens were hardy pioneers, but of an elegant class; some from Virginia and Kentucky, some from Pennsylvania and Maryland, some from Ohio, others from the best society of Detroit and Monroe, Michigan, and not a few Knickerbockers, and a sprinkling of "down East" Yankees, and combined both Protestants and Catholics, but these "gave up," and those "held not back," until we formed a homogeneous unity, peculiarly sui generis and Fort Wayneish.

For the want of amusements, which of late years have come to the place, we had balls and social parties, when ladies and gentlemen met, at evening generally. For the lack of news through the papers, gentlemen met at the hotels to relate incidents of the day, and hear the new ore tenus from travelers arriving and friends returning from the different towns and settlements far and near. Public entertainments, ball, social parties, banquets, etc., were gotten up and conducted in a style quite as elegant as in any western town. There was a liberality among traders that did not descend to pennies. Everything was done on a scale of generosity which looked beyond and above a per cent, in the way of "change." We had the Spanish, or Mexican coin--dollars, quarters, halves, eighths and sixteenths--the latter, though, sometimes called "levenpences," and "fips" were usually called shillings and sixpences, and according to "York currency," eight shillings to the dollar. A dime would buy two drams, a shilling would buy no more; but a quarter would buy five drams of the best French brandy or old Dayton whisky, decanters of which were then almost as common as tumblers and other glassware on our side-boards . . .

Our pleasure rides for gallantry and past-time, were then taken on horseback, in summer, and extended up the St. Mary's River to Chief



. . . ladies and gentlemen met to relate the incidents of the day . . .



Richardville's, five miles, and in winter on the Canal in sleighs, ten miles west to Vermilyea's. This was the double-log house of Mr. Jesse Vermilyea and lady, who were, I speak from knowledge, quite as competent to do the graces of host and hostess as any persons I have ever met. The "bill of fare" was always equal to the occasion, and prepared in the very best style. This gentleman and lady were equally matched. Mr. Vermilyea died on August 8, 1846, at his residence in Aboite Township, lamented by whites and Indians, rich and poor, and his lady many years later.

Our Court days, twice a year, brought together most of the county, as did the Fourth of July, which was always celebrated in the spirit of '76. Our general elections were then held on the first Monday of August annually; and as every elector could vote anywhere in the county, nearly all came from the country to town to vote. Strange as it may seem at this time, men who had a quarrel to settle, met at the election and fought it out with fists and feet. I remember on the first Monday of August, 1838, after nightfall, of seeing several hard personal battles fought at the crossing of Calhoun and Columbia streets. The blows given sounded like those a butcher fells an ox with.

We had but few books, and those we read and understood well, and made a proper application of our knowledge, derived from them.

Our churches were well attended, and the Sabbath day quite better observed then than now.

Our judges, lawyers, preachers, and doctors, would not suffer in the least by comparison with the best today. I knew all these gentlemen well . . .

Honorables Charles W. Ewing, Thomas Johnson, Lucien P. Ferry, Henry Cooper, Reuben J. Dawson, of the bar, Lewis G. Thompson, Lewis Beecher, Philip G. Jones and Charles E. Sturgis, physicians, and a long list of invaluable citizens, non-professional, who then lived here and shone in business, and adorned society, have ceased from their labors. Around the graves of nearly all the bar of that day have I stood and laid fresh evergreens on the delved earth of their narrow homes. Though those evergreens have faded and those bodies become dust, as often as I am called to pay the sad office to a departed brother I renew those memories in that spirit of which the new generation feels nothing. How true the allegory:

"The path of glory leads but to the grave."

My sketches of Fort Wayne as it was before the present generation lived is now ended, and as it is probable that it will not again be attempted by any living witness, it will pass into history to be more appreciated as time pushes this period into the past . . .

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Thursday, March 28, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

Recollections of Hon. Charles W. Ewing

By Hon. John W. Dawson

The recent death of John Colerick, Esq., has suggested some memories of Judge Charles W. Ewing, which, by my professional brethren will certainly be read with great interest. I speak thus positively, because of my long acquaintance with the bench and bar of this part of the State. I know there has always been exhibited an esprit du corps among them while living that made them interested in anything that honorably concerned their dead compeers.

When I came to this town, in 1838, Mr. Ewing was then President Judge of the Eighth Judicial Circuit. Though he was very much my senior, I was adventitiously thrown into his company very often. I may say truthfully that it was my good fortune to have been, much before my majority, the recipient of the favors and good countenance of the first men resident and visiting here on public business. I have never ceased to feel under great obligations for the information and good advice I received. Judge Ewing took an interest in me and gave me his good counsel and friendship up to the time of his death. And now, in the thirtieth year after that sad event, I take pleasure in testifying to his good qualities . . .

Prior to the year 1824 Mr. Ewing was located at Detroit, Michigan, as a practicing lawyer; and among compeers of unquestionable refinement and professional culture he was able to take a distinguished rank . . . He went to Logansport, I think--and there began the practice of the law under very flattering circumstances and with great success. He practiced in this place in 1824, for I find that he was appointed by the court Prosecuting Attorney, for the term, began on August 9, 1824--was appointed First Master in Chancery of the same court at the same term and at the August term 1826; reported a device for the official seal of said court and it was approved by Judge Eggleston, of this, the then Third Circuit. Here he practiced for several years . . .

He returned to Indiana after 1830, and began again the practice of law with usual success, and so continued till early in the year 1837, when he was elected President Judge of the then Eighth Judicial Circuit. He held his first term in this county early in March of that year, assisted by Marshall S. Wines, and associate judge, of whom it is truth to say, that, though he was no lawyer, he was so well fitted by nature and education, that he would have done no discredit to the bench, had he presided.

It was at the April term of the same court, in 1838, that I first saw Judge Ewing on the bench. Thomas Johnson, Esq., was prosecuting the

March 28, 1872

pleas of the State, John P. Hedges was sheriff, and Allen Hamilton, clerk. One Asa Crapo was under prosecution and on trial for the murder of an Irishman, at Bull Rapids, about sixteen miles down the Maumee River, on the Wabash & Erie Canal, there and then in the process of construction. He was prosecuted by William Johnson, and defended by Cooper and Colerick, and was acquitted. This trial was so well conducted by the prosecution, and defense, and so well adjudicated by the bench as to create entire public satisfaction, even amidst the excitement that prevailed. In April, 1858, just thirty years after, while I was assisting in the prosecution of the pleas of the State, in the Lagrange Circuit Court, as an auxiliary to that wholesome movement, the "Regulators," I found this same Crapo one of the file leaders of that terrible band of thieves, burglars, and counterfeiterers that so long infested Northern Indiana and Southern Michigan.

Judge Ewing was by nature fitted for a lawyer, jurist, and gentleman . . .

In the summer of 1839, Judge Ewing resigned the Judgeship, and entered again on the practice of law, taking the lead of his profession, then distinguished for its ability, and equal to the brilliancy and ability of any period since . . .

The "maniac thought" rushed over him, and on the morning of January 9, 1843, the whole city was startled with the appalling intelligence that Charles W. Ewing had shot himself with a pistol. His death was almost instantaneous. Thus he found the long quiet sleep of the grave . . .

He fell in the 45th year of his age, universally lamented, and the Circuit Court being in session, the Bar, through Lucien P. Ferry, Esq. offered a beautiful tribute, which I give as a fitting close to this sketch, to show how well and how feelingly our professional brethren of that day spoke. I give only a paragraph of his excellence:

"If we should permit ourselves to speak of his qualities as a man of genius and as a lawyer, from the promptings of that friendship which an association with him for years, has only tended to cement, we might be suspected of indulging in a panegyric of too frequent repetition to be prized, and unsuitable perhaps, from its length, to the occasion on which it would be offered. We cannot, however, suffer even this opportunity to pass without testifying to that highly gentlemanly deportment which, characterizing, as it did, a long and continued intercourse with us, under all the vicissitudes and privations incident to our employment, added to a deserved prominence as a lawyer, and advocate and judge, can hardly fail to impress us with a painful sense of that vacuum which his decrease has occasioned."



CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Wednesday, April 3, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

Captain William Wells

By Hon. John W. Dawson

The subject of this sketch, as one of the pioneers of this place, and long ago numbered with the dead, and who fell while defending his country against Indian and British invasion and aggression, deserves a notice now nearly sixty years since his death. He was a native of Kentucky, and from all the early data I can command at this time, was born about the year 1764. Volney, the French philosopher, who, during his western travels was at Vincennes, and perhaps at this place, about 1796-97, having met Wells at Detroit, says:

"The only person in America capable of giving me the aid I wanted, was a man by the name of Wells, who had been made a captive by the Indians at thirteen years of age, and, having previously had a good education, he acquired an accurate knowledge of many of their dialects, while he lived among them. After the victories of Wayne, in 1794, he obtained leave to return home, and was at this time (1798) negotiating at Detroit with more than seven hundred Indians."

At another place he speaks of Wells having been with the Indians fifteen years, and that he seemed then thirty-two years of age. In another part he quotes Wells as saying at Philadelphia that he was taken by the Indians at the age of thirteen years, and was adopted and well treated by them. He also says, as Wells often said, that he (Wells) was at the defeat of General St. Clair, at Fort Recovery, Ohio, in 1791. This data will put the date of his birth about 1764, his capture about 1777, and his exodus from them about 1795.

During his life with the Indians he married the sister of Little Turtle, then the great war chief of the Miami Indians, who inhabited the upper branches of the Wabash, and whose language was spoken by all the tribes of that river--Weas, Piankeshaws, Peorias and Kaskaskias, and in which dialects he was perfect. This marriage was brought about by the kindness of the same squaw, who early after his capture saved him from a barbarous death, which the Indians had designed to inflict upon him. It was with the Turtle that Volney found him at Philadelphia, and after Turtle's conviction that all efforts against the United States were fruitless, when he was endeavoring to get the assistance of the Government and the Society of Friends to aid him in his laudable intentions of subsistence by tilling the soil. The separation of Wells and Little Turtle took place some time before that, and after Wayne's victory. When Wells was leaving the Indians, he took Little Turtle with him to a "Big Elm" tree three miles east of this. This tree

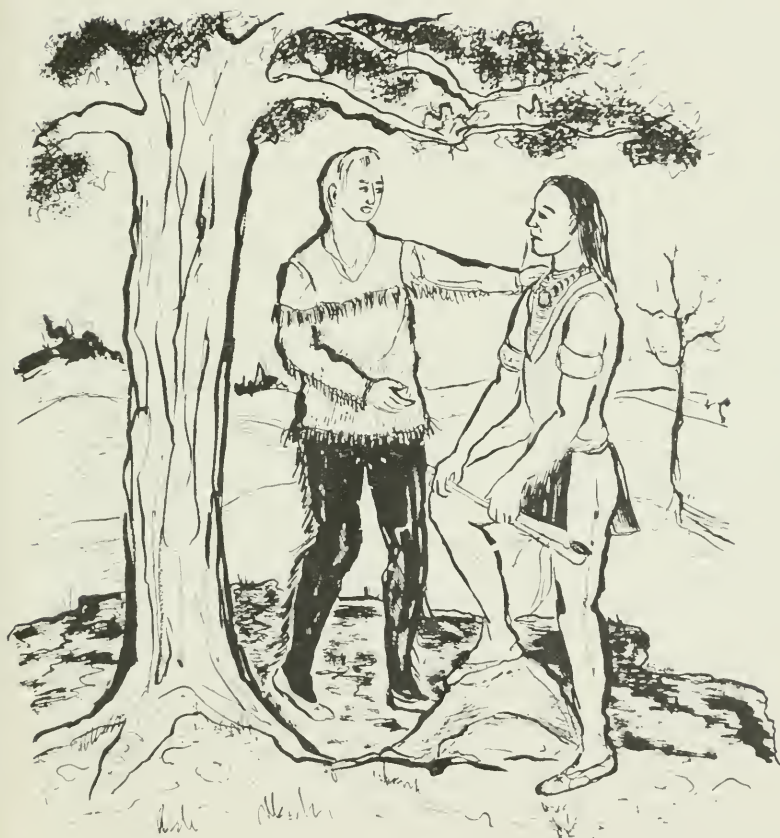
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was long called the "Post Office" from the fact that a party from the Fort celebrating the Fourth of July under it, met the Express with the mail from Detroit and the officer in command of the garrison then present opened it. At this tree the two being about to part Wells told Turtle that they had long traveled the same road together, and in one interest, but now they must separate--that he would henceforth act with the whites, and if they in future met they must be arrayed against one another; that he loved him and the Indians who had always treated him so well, but the whites were his kindred and nation, and he felt constrained to act with them in future. With this they separated--but Turtle soon found it proper to follow Wells and was ever after known as a friend to the whites, but was greatly distrusted by the Indians; and for his good offices to the government, he was amply rewarded.

By this marriage with Little Turtle's sister he had four children, viz.: Ann, Rebecca, Mary, and William Wayne Wells. These perhaps, were all born before 1800, and before his exodus from the Indians. On his exodus and return to Kentucky, he married a white lady, the issue of which marriage, as far as I can learn, was Yelverton P. Wells. These half-Indian children were well taken care of and sent to Kentucky for education, and when educated, returned and took and held a fine social position among our best people. They were Christian ladies, and at the house of Ann, who very early married to Dr. William Turner, Surgeon's mate to the United States Army at this post, religious service was first held here. She and her sister Rebecca, who had married Captain James Hackley, also of the United States Army, having very early--prior to 1820--joined the Baptist Church under the labors of Reverend Isaac McCoy, a missionary to the Indians at this post. These two ladies, Mrs. Turner and Hackley, were of the first members of the Presbyterian Church, organized here on July 1, 1831, by Reverend James Chute, of the Presbytery of Columbus, Ohio. The other and youngest daughter of Captain Wells married Judge James Wolcott, of Fort Miami, near Maumee City, Ohio, who died in March, 1843.

William Wayne Wells was educated at West Point, as a cadet from Kentucky--graduated with honors--was appointed to a lieutenancy in the U. S. Army, and died in early manhood.

Captain Wells was a very useful person to the United States, and was an excellent interpreter. He was early appointed a captain of the spies and lived on the east bank of Spy Run, just north of the foot of Clay Street, at the old orchard, at the north end of the long embankment on Spy Run Avenue. For his good offices to the United States, the Congress granted him the right to pre-empt, or buy at \$1.25 per acre, a half section of land in the forks of the St. Mary's and St. Joseph rivers, but he having died before the entry, it was laid off by survey and his children entered it, hence the name of Wells Pre-emption applied to the land in the forks of these rivers, erroneously called "Wells Reserve." He was at one time Indian Agent at this place under the appointment of the United States. He went from here with some forces, in August, 1812, to relieve the garrison at Chicago, Fort Dearborn. The fort having been evacuated by the improvi-



. . . now we must separate . . .

April 3, 1872

dent conduct of Captain Heald--the little garrison set out for Fort Wayne, Captain Wells with it. He and nearly all the men were massacred three miles this way from the fort on the Lake Shore, on August 15, 1812. The scalp of Captain Wells was taken by an Indian, Pee-sa-tum, his heart taken out, cut to pieces, and distributed among and eaten by the Indians. His mutilated remains were then taken by one Billy Caldwell, and buried in the sand, over which now the city of Chicago is built.

This 320 acres of land was, about 1825, divided among five of the children of Captain Wells, viz.: Mrs. Turner, Mrs. Hackley, Mrs. Wolcott, Lieutenant William Wayne Wells and Yelverton P. Wells.

In connection with this division of the land, I will note a tragedy which occurred. Captain Hackley lived prior to the partition, on the north bank of the St. Mary's in a line with Clinton Street, now a part of the City Park, and Mrs. Turner on the east side of Spy Run, and before the partition took place it was agreed that if the lot of either should be assigned to the other, then they would quit claim mutually so as to let each remain in statu quo. But when this assignment was made Mrs. Turner drew Captain Hackley's part, and refusing to exchange, moved in with Captain Hackley. This enraged him and it seems he resolved to take her life and after it his own.

On a certain evening there was a party given for the children at Colonel Hugh Hanna's in town, and which Captain Hackley attended and enjoyed much. While there he delivered two letters to a Mr. Daniels with instruction to deliver them the next night precisely at 12 o'clock, one to General John Tipton, (afterwards U. S. Senator) the other to Mr. Kercheval. He returned from the party, and on the next night he told his wife to stay in a certain room and not to follow him. He then went to Mrs. Turner's room and seeing from his countenance that he intended harm and knowing of his ill will, she sprang out of a window and escaped. He then went to a small room near by and hanged himself. At the appointed hour General Tipton and Mr. Kercheval received the letters and were informed thereby to go at once to Captain Hackley's house. Suspecting something tragic they took Dr. L. G. Thompson with them and hastened to the house. They found Mrs. Hackley alone in a close, dark room to which Captain Hackley had directed her. On further search they found Captain Hackley quite dead, hanging by the neck. He was buried in his own allotment, and not a hundred feet east of my present residence on Spy Run Avenue, and where I am chronicling his death over half a century after it transpired. This was in the year 1826. He left two children--Jack W. and Ann--who are the re-servers each of a section of land granted them by the Miami Indians, by the treaty of Paradise Springs, near Wabash, Indiana, in the fall of 1826. These two sections of land lie on the east bank of the St. Joseph River--one at the mouth of Cedar Creek, the other two miles below. In this county Mrs. Turner died a widow and without issue, hence her allotment descended to Mrs. Wolcott.

Ann Hackley, the daughter, and Jack W. Hackley, the son of Rebecca, were well known here. The former married Nathan Farrand, a merchant, and surviving him married Mr. Blystone. Jack was about my

April 3, 1872

age. I knew him well, and went to school with him. They were both well respected here, and having moved many years ago to Kansas, I suppose near the lands left with abundant property, neither seemed capable of even preserving it from improvident sale, and I apprehend both died poor.

At a fitting time I shall notice the great Chief Little Turtle, whose Indian name was Me-chi-can-no-quah, sometimes spelt, Mesh-e-kun-nagh-quah, pronounced Mish-e-cun-no-quah, accent on first and fourth syllables.



CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Friday, April 5, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5

The Flagpole

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

Relics are always sought after! The older they are the better! To those who have faith, spurious ones are just as good as the genuine, and for that, they might pass as real; but when the truth of history is involved, then the real is alone of consequence.

These suggestions are prefatory to some remarks made in the gazette a few days ago, on the piece of wood which Mr. Thomas Stevens had taken from a stump of a pole found in the rear of his lot, on the northwest corner of Clay and Berry streets, and said to be the stump of the veritable flagpole of old "Fort Wayne." Now a few sentences on this subject by way of "Charcoal Sketches" may be of interest to our people.

The first fort erected here in 1794 by General Wayne, was a very rude one, built of round logs. It is quite probable very nearly on the same spot that the next one was built in 1804, which latter certainly occupied the same ground that the one did built by Major Whistler, under order of General Armstrong, Secretary of War in the year 1815. It was a very excellent one, and was evacuated in 1819. The presumption that commands the approach of the three rivers, is at the boat landing. Near by there was a very fine spring of water which supplied the garrison until a well was sunk when the second fort was built, and which may yet be seen giving forth its free and pure water from the bank of the Maumee just below the south end of the river bridge. In the center of the esplanade, and very nearly at the same spot where Peter Kiser's "liberty pole" stands at this writing (lot 40, Taber's Addition--now owned by the city) was the flagpole of the "Post," when the "Post" was evacuated, and even up to 1840 or later. This is as much as 250 feet from where Mr. Stevens is said to have found the stump of the "old flagpole," and that much further from the bank of the river, and from the spring. These data, added to the fact that no timber of the size of a flagpole--cut green and set in the ground could endure with any identity for a period of seventy years and upwards, leaves the stump which was so lately found, void of the interest which would attach to it were it the veritable stump.

A fact in political history may throw some light on the subject. It is a matter of history so notorious that needs scarcely an allusion thereto, that this place was the scene of much of General Harrison's early military life. He was a subaltern in the army of General Wayne, an aid-de-camp in the family of that General prior to 1795, Secretary of the Northwestern Territory in 1797, delegate in Congress from the same in 1799, appointed



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Governor of Indiana Territory by President John Adams, in 1801, and ex-officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs; commanded at the battle of Tippecanoe, in 1811; raised the siege of Fort Wayne, September 12, 1812; Fort Meigs and Thames, 1813; later a Senator of the United States, from Ohio; and in November, 1840, elected President of the United States of America by the heartfelt voice of a large majority of his grateful countrymen. It was during this campaign in the summer of 1840 that, on the square on which Mr. Stevens lives (then vacant), immediately in front and south of the Fort grounds, that many ash poles were raised by the Whigs in honor of General Harrison; and the Democrats hickory ones in honor of President Van Buren, then a candidate for re-election; and this was repeated with but little less ardor in 1844, in the contest between Henry Clay and James K. Polk for the Presidency. Indeed during these two contests those of proper memory will call to mind that this place, as others in the West, ran up so many poles, that the traveler approaching the town was reminded of the spars of shipping in some harbor. And I am not inclined to doubt that it is one of these political poles the stump of which Mr. Stevens has mistaken for the remnant of the flagpole of the ancient fort at this place. One of the same kind in my opinion, may be found at the southeast angle of Columbia and Calhoun streets, which was planted there by the Whigs in 1844. It was so large that no garrison of men seventy years ago could have elevated, for the want of facilities to do it with, and it is not improbable that the size of the stump in question, so lately unearthed, on close inspection will be found so large as to leave us to infer that so large a pole was unnecessary at a small fort in the Indian country, 180 miles from fair settlements, and that it was not in the power of the garrison to have raised so large a one.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Saturday, April 6, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

Early Masonic History--Wayne Lodge, No. 25. F. A. M.

By Hon. John W. Dawson

Turning today from biographies and recollections of the pioneers of Fort Wayne, which have occupied my attention for a fortnight under the caption of "Charcoal Sketches," I propose in this issue of the SENTINEL to give a brief of the rise and progress of Wayne Lodge, No. 25, of this ancient and useful order, up to 1847.

On March 2, 1823, and before the organization of Allen County, Grand Master John Sheets, resident at Madison, issued a dispensation, attested by Secretary William C. Keen, Grand Secretary, also residing at Madison, to Alexander Ewing, Worshipful Master, John P. Hedges, S. W., and Benjamin Cushman, J. W., together with all such brethren as thereafter might become members, to organize a lodge to be known as Wayne Lodge, No. 25, in the town of Fort Wayne, Allen County, Indiana. The dispensation was presented by Worshipful Alexander Ewing, to a meeting of Masons held in this place in May of that year (1823), at which meeting there appeared, in addition to those entrusted with and named in the dispensation, Captain James Hackley, Benjamin B. Kercheval, Master Masons, and visitors Master Masons General John Tipton, of Pisgah Lodge, No. 5, of Corydon, Indiana; Anthony L. Davis, of Franklin Lodge, No. 28, of Kentucky; Richard L. Britton, of St. John's Lodge No. 13, Ohio; John McCorkle, of No. 14, Ohio; and Robert A. Forsyth. On reading the dispensation, the lodge was opened in the first degree in ancient form--consisting of Alexander Ewing, W. M., John P. Hedges, S. W. and secretary pro tem, B. Cushman, J. W., James Hackley, treasurer and S. D. pro tem, and Benjamin Kercheval, S. and T. pro tem. On June 6, the next meeting was held, at which the W. M. appointed Charles W. Ewing, secretary; James Hackley, S. D.; Robert Hars, J. D.; B. B. Kercheval, T.; and William Hedges, S. and T.

Thus constituted, this Lodge proceeded to work under the same authority until November 17 of the same year, under a dispensation of Grand Master, Thomas Douglass, of Madison, dated October 10, General John Tipton, afterwards U. S. Senator from Indiana, instituted the said Lodge in due form. Alexander Ewing, secretary; A. L. Davis, treasurer; J. Hackley and H. G. McKean, deacons; and James Wyman, S. and T. The first regular election took place on the Christmas of that year, and General Tipton was chosen the first elected Worshipful Master after its organization. The first application for degrees was unanimously rejected. General Tipton was re-elected in June, 1824 and again on December 6, and re-

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elected each successive term till June 3, 1828. The first initiated member of this Lodge was Lambert Cushois, August 6, 1824. The first celebration of St. John's Day was held June 24, 1825--General John Tipton, orator. First public installation of officers, December 27, 1825, at the house of Hugh Hanna. The first Masonic burial May 26, 1826--the body of Captain James Hackley, who committed suicide by hanging--as I noticed in the DAILY SENTINEL. This burial of a felo de se, though out of order, was given to gratify the widow, who as I have already said, was a half Indian daughter of Captain Wells, a Christian, and intelligent lady, and generally respected. This was an act becoming the order--they could not serve the dead--but would relieve the distressed. On June 24, the order had their first public dinner, prepared by Alexander Ewing. At the meeting held June 27 the brotherhood appropriated fifty dollars for the relief of Captain James Riley, a brother Mason then in great affliction from disease, and then in the town en route for the East for medical aid. This is the Captain Riley who laid out Willshire, Ohio, and surveyed all the lands in this region as well as a large body in Ohio, and to whom I referred in the first part of my "Sketches." He came here from Willshire in March of that year, by boat on the St. Mary's River, in order to have the benefit of constant medical attendance. Here he stayed until early in July, and then was removed on a feather bed, lying in a boat, and proceeded down the Maumee. In the SEQUEL to his NARRATIVE, page 26, he adds: "With my son James and proper attendants on board, we cast off, and was accompanied for several miles down the river by the Masonic Fraternity, who extended their brotherly kindness as far as possible, and are entitled to my warm and grateful consideration." He reached Fort Meigs on July 5, sailed for Detroit and reached New York on the 24th.

Here I will correct an error, made in my first notice of Captain Riley, wherein I state that he died at Magadore. It was on March 13, 1840, that he died on a voyage from New York to St. Thomas, and within two day's sail of that port. He was on the 18th committed to the deep, blue sea, "on whose bosom he had spent so many years of active enjoyment, as well as of toil and peril."

The next death after Captain Hackley, was Alexander Ewing, the father of William G. Ewing, Charles W. Ewing, Alexander Ewing, Jr., and George W. Ewing, all now dead. This event took place January 5, and his burial was on January 27, 1827. Joseph Holman was elected Master, in June, 1828, and was succeeded by Dr. Lewis G. Thompson, December 1, 1828; he by A. L. Davis, June 1, 1829; he by Colonel Hugh Hanna, January 23, 1830; he by Absalom Holcomb, June 7, 1830; he by Samuel Hanna, June 6, 1831; he by A. L. Davis, December 1, 1831; he by Captain Henry Rudisill, February 20, 1833; he by Major Samuel Edsall, June 10, 1833, at which meeting a committee, theretofore appointed, reported that they had sold the Lodge lot and premises for \$1,328. This lot was that on which Hill & Orbison's warehouse stands, at the west end of Columbia Street, north side, on the Canal Basin, and the house was a two-story brick, completed about mid-summer, 1830.

April 6, 1872

From June 10, 1833, after a labor of ten years, the lodge ceased to work. It was reorganized and worked a few years between that and the year 1840, of which, it is regretful to say, no record is left of the proceedings--human memory alone can tell, and only a very few of those who know, live to bear the testimony of what was done.

On March 3, 1840, after public notice given to consider the propriety of again setting to work, a meeting was held, at which, Henry Rudisill presided as W. H.; Samuel Edsall, S. W.; H. B. Taylor, J. W.; C. E. Sturgis, secretary; F. Comparet, treasurer; T. Daniels, S. D.; William Rockhill, J. D.; and A. Holcomb, T. It continued to work prosperously until the autumn of 1847. Then failing to report its dues to the Grand Lodge, its charter was suspended and the lodge ceased to work. On July 4, 1849, its charter was restored and it proceeded. It was just on the eve of this suspension in 1847 that Joseph Johnson and myself were entered, passed, and raised, but of which there is no recorded evidence; the only memoranda in my possession, being a receipt of Secretary Samuel H. Shoaff for \$15 initiation fee dated May 14, 1847. Mr. Johnson and I were offered together, but my case was put over for a while to enable Judge Samuel Stophlet and I to reconcile a "bout" which we had in the very "nick of time." It grew out of my opposition to the nomination of Judge Bluffton, and will form the subject of another sketch, in connection with Judge Ewing's celebrated Coon-skin bill. He had theretofore endeavored to get through the Legislature, in order to check-mate the American Fur Company in its opposition to his firm in buying furs in Indiana.

In closing this sketch, I have called the roll of all who are named in it, and only Mr. Shoaff, Captain William Stewart and Peter Kiser survive . . .

#### SUPPLEMENTAL

Since the foregoing was in type, a few thoughts have occurred to me on the same subject, and which are deemed of such consequence in this connection that they are added:

Wayne Lodge 25, was organized within the pickets of the "Old Fort" in a room at that time occupied by General Tipton, and in the same room the Order worked for some time thereafter--then in a room in Washington Hall, southwest corner of Barr and Columbia streets, and in indifferent places thereafter, until the society had built and occupied Masonic Hall. The reason that the Lodge ceased to work was the result of the anti-Masonic feeling which, though a mere lad, I remember. Public opinion in the United States grew wild, and the storm swept on like a furious hurricane, causing every opposition to fall before it. This feeling grew out of the abduction of Morgan, at Batavia, New York, by a few over-zealous Masons, because he published what was called an exposition of the secret work of the Order. This abduction caused no excitement in Canada, just across the line, between New York and that Dominion, but in the United States political demagogues seized on it, and it became the rally cry of one party, while the

April 6, 1872

friends of the Order had to succumb, and the work, therefore, was retarded many years, even until public mind returned to its polarity.



CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Wednesday, April 10, 1872

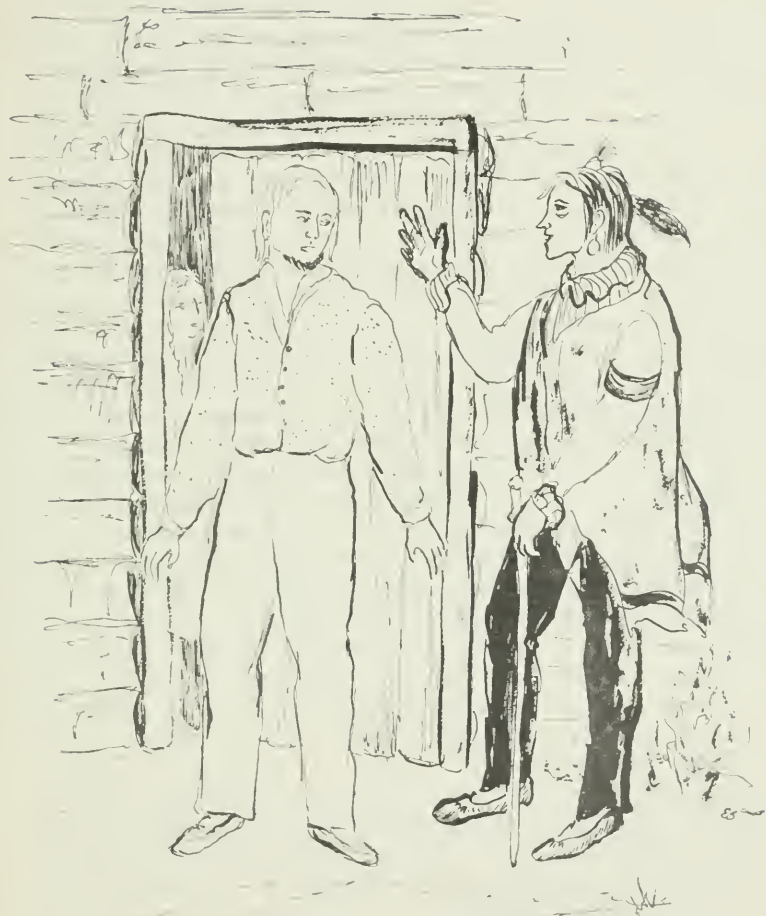
Page 3, Col. 5-6

The Siege of Fort Wayne--Antoine Bondie, a French  
Trader--Me-te-a, a Potawatomi Chief

By Hon. John W. Dawson

Immediately after the massacre of Chicago, in August 1812, the Potawatomi Indians who were engaged in that treacherous deed, spent some time on the Big St. Joseph. At the instigation of the British Emissaries, they determined, by a simultaneous movement, to lay siege to Fort Wayne, and Fort Harrison (Terre Haute). At this time there lived very near the fort, a trader by the name of Antoine Bondie. He was of French descent, about fifty years of age, and had lived among the Indians since he was a boy of twelve years. He had married a squaw, conformed to Indian customs and life, and was recognized by the Miami tribes as one of their number.\* The hostile tribes respected him and desired to save him from the destruction which the siege would cause, as they had no doubt of the massacre of the garrison. They sent Me-te-a, a Chief, to his cabin at night, to inform him of all that had transpired, and all that was contemplated, and enjoining great secrecy. They offered to furnish him with pack horses to remove him and his family and goods beyond the reach of the guns, to a place of safety. This was not declined; but the next morning, Bondie, accompanied by the post interpreter, went to Major Stickney, Indian Agent, very early, and, exacting strict confidence and secrecy, informed him of what had transpired. The agent doubted the story. He hesitated what to do in a case which involved such serious consequences if the story of Bondie should prove true. He sent a note to Captain Rhea, in command of the garrison, desiring a meeting in the esplanade, so that no one might overhear what was said. By him Bondie was suspected of mendacity. This more embarrassed Major Stickney, who then sent for Bondie and repeated, and it now remained for the agent to pass the matter and incur the danger of siege by the Indians and British, or report the information without his official belief, which would bring no relief. He chose to hazard his reputation by assuming it to be true, and so informed Captain Rhea. He (the agent) had just received a dispatch from Governor Harrison from Vincennes, saying that he was going to Cincinnati, where he must be addressed if necessary, and that he should send one express to him at Cincinnati, and another to Captain Taylor (afterward General, and President of the United States), commanding at Fort Harrison. Returning to his office, Major Stickney began making preparations to dispatch his messengers, when Captain Rhea requested him to delay until he could write to the Governor of Ohio, advising him of the report. With this Major Stickney complied, and expresses were sent to





. . . Bondie and Me-te-a . . .

April 10, 1872

Governor Harrison and Governor Meigs.

Now active preparations were commenced for defense--ladies and children were sent off to the frontier. Within a few hours the savages drew their guards around the fort. On the 5th of August, Major Stickney was quite sick, and so remained for twelve days, and was then taken from the agency house to the fort for safety. Here it was ascertained that Bondie's story was true, and he and his family, also, had moved into the fort for safety. The warriors began to assemble about the fort in large numbers. It was now evident that they expected to get possession by stratagem. They seemed to await an opportune moment to force the sentries, but this the sentinels did not allow. Stephen Johnson, a clerk in the U. S. Factory Store, feeling solicitous for the safety of his wife, and accompanied by Peter Oliver and a discharged militiaman, attempted to elude the vigilance of the Indians and visit her. They left at 10 o'clock at night, but when about half of a mile from the fort, he was fired upon by six Indians and instantly killed. The other two retreated to the fort. Johnson was tomahawked and scalped, and stabbed in twenty-three places, and otherwise abused. His body was brought into the fort by White Raccoon, a Miami chief, at the instance and under the pay of Bondie. Not till the treaty of Greenville of 1814 was it known who the murderers were. They proved to be three Potawatomi, as indicated by White Raccoon. The Indians continued to commit depredations for some days, but evidently were anxious to delay until the British arrived. They used many devices to effect a capitulation; among others was the firing off of a hollow log, which Parish, a half-breed Potawatomi, had contrived, in order to create the belief in the fort that British aid had arrived. This incident is related on the authority of General Leslie Coombs, of Kentucky, who was present, and who related it in the fall of the year 1847, at the dinner table of Henry Clay, to a party of gentlemen whom I met there while I was attending law school at Lexington--consisting of Judge George Robertson, so long Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals of that State, yet lingering in the dim twilight of life--Morton McMichael, of the North American, Philadelphia, Mr. Coombs, yet living green old age and Judge Horace P. Biddle, of Logansport, Indiana. The Indians, among other things, kept a white flag which was sent them to be used as a signal of truce several days--and until the agent told them they had dirtied it and he would not allow them to retain it any longer. The next day the whole body moved up the fort bearing the flag. The agent went to the gate and designated the chiefs to be admitted, and who on entering one at a time were disarmed and examined. The thirteen followed the agent to his sleeping quarters. The agent sent a note to Captain Rhea requesting that the guards should be paraded and kept under arms. During the conference tobacco was given the chiefs. When the smoke began to get out, Winnemac, a Potawatomi chief, arose and began to speak to the effect that they had no hand in the killing of Mr. Johnson; that it was the conduct of their young men, and that these had taken the soldiers' horses, etc. "But," continued Winnemac, "if my father wishes for war, I am the man." Here he struck his hand upon his knife, which was concealed under his blanket. Seeing

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the danger, Bondie jumped to his feet quickly, and, striking his knife, said, "I am a man, too," and became very pale. Winnemac cast his eye toward Ann-ouk-sa, their principal chief, who was near a window, and in full view of the guards and saw a look of disapprobation. The stratagem had failed. It was afterwards ascertained that the plan was, when Winnemac repeated the words, "I am a man," that he was to kill the agent. Other chiefs were each to rush into the officers' quarters and kill them, while others would force the gates and let in the whole Indian force. In a few days a Mr. William Oliver, a sutler to the fort, who bore dispatches from General Harrison, arrived from Cincinnati. He had pursued his way alone by the way of Wapakoneta, from whence he was accompanied by four brave Shawanese Indians, and in broad day light entered the fort in haste with a yell--having sent his guards back. Oliver brought the glad news of General Harrison's march to the relief of the fort.

Captain Rhea talked of surrendering--was constantly drunk; and but for the courage and sobriety of his subordinates, all would have been lost.

Suffice to say that General Harrison arrived on September 12, and relieved the garrison with about 5,000 men. Charges were preferred against Captain Rhea, and a Court Martial ordered by General Harrison. The evidence heard, he was thought guilty of drunkenness, and that his commission ought to be taken from him. General Harrison gave him the alternative of a resignation on account of his age and long service. This was accepted and he left the army.

Having now shown what important service was rendered by Antoine Bondie to the little garrison of sixty-eight men, besieged by the Indians, and which service saved their lives and certainly thousands of others, who would have been massacred, had Fort Wayne fallen, I shall in the next give a sketch of Me-te-a **who was** wounded at the Five-mile swamp, by

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\*Bondie lived in a cabin near, or on the very spot where the Fort Wayne Gas Works are built. There was a Government Factory house and blacksmith shop where Berry Street is, between Lafayette and Clay streets. The former stood near where Mr. Randall's new house is built, and the latter at the precise point where Judge Carson's residence is, and the remains of which I saw dug out when he was building that house. There were also four or five log cabins located near the southwest corner of Lafayette and Main streets, used by Mr. Bourie, father of Captain John B. Bourie, and other buildings around the Fort, most of them burned by the garrison in a calm time, in order to prevent the Indians from firing them when the wind should be in the direction of the Fort, besides others which the Indians maliciously burned. There was also a ten-acre field, fenced with common rails, at, and very contiguous to, the southeast corner of the Fort, used by the garrison for a pasture for the horses belonging to it. There was also some cornfields over the Maumee, adjoining where the bridge is now,

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Major Mann of General Harrison's army as it came to the relief of the garrison on September 12, 1812.

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and a farm, of some forty or fifty acres, owned and occupied by the white widow and family of Captain William Wells, who had been the month before massacred at Fort Dearborn, Chicago. On this improvement of Captain Wells, were very comfortable buildings, a good orchard, plenty of stock, and several negro slaves, which the Captain had brought theretofore from Kentucky. The family and slaves and all the movables that could be removed, were secured at the Fort, but the houses were burned by the Indians.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Friday, April 12, 1872

Page 5, Col. 5-6

Me-te-a, Potawatomi Chief

By Hon. John W. Dawson

Me-te-a was a war chief of the Potawatomi Indians, who inhabited the region in the immediate north and northeast of Fort Wayne, and was in the meridian of his power influence and strength in the war of 1812. His villages, at the date of the siege of Fort Wayne, and for ten or fifteen years afterwards, were on the Little St. Joseph River. One was at the mouth of Cedar Creek, where Cedarville is now located. The marks of cultivation, such as corn-hills, I saw very distinctly in October, 1838, the first time I passed up the St. Joseph River. The other on the same (west) side of that river, just above the Feeder Dam, on what is called the Bourie Section, a tract reserved to John B. Bourie, by the treaty of Paradise Springs (Wabash, Indiana), in 1826, and which may be seen as noted on the elegant county map, just published by the present efficient County Auditor, Henry J. Rudisill. The former, that of Cedarville, was the continuation of the Indian town which was destroyed by General Hardin, who was detached by General Harmar, in October, 1790, for that purpose. At that time he also destroyed another town, at what is now Spencerville, DeKalb County. Returning by the way of Eel River (the crossing of that stream by the Trace, to Fort Dearborn, as then and afterwards traveled, now Heller's Corners), he was there lamentably defeated. To retrieve the disgrace of this, the attempt was made to recover the Miami, or Omee towns, and resulted in Harmar's defeat, just below the city, and on the bottom between the St. Joseph and Maumee, on October 22, 1790. This reservation of Mr. Bourie was described "so as to include Chop-pa-tee village," and is that which was called by the whites Me-te-a's village, as I suppose.

General Harrison hurried forward with his troops to raise the siege of Fort Wayne, on September 12, 1812, as stated in my last sketch. Me-te-a and a few braves planned an ambuscade at the "Five Mile Swamp," in Adams Township, where the Wayne Trace crossed it and at the place where the County Road ran and has for a great many years crossed--southeast of the city, about five miles, having made an ambush on each side of the Trace in a narrow defile where the troops would crowd together of necessity. Behind it, they laid in waiting for the arrival of the army. But Major Mann, a spy and avant courier discovered the ambush in time to save effusion of blood. Me-te-a had taken his position behind a tree, but left his elbow exposed as it laid across the breech of his rifle which rested on his left shoulder. This having been discovered by Major Mann he instantly took aim and fired. The ball took effect and broke the arm of the chief, as



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the Major at once discovered. Hoping to capture him, he set chase after Me-te-a who having gathered up his disabled arm, cried "Ugh! Ugh!" and fled. By extraordinary exertion, he eluded the Major, hastened to the Fort, and informed the besieging Indians of the approach of the army in time to enable them to leave without loss that afternoon, before General Harrison entered the sally ports of the fort.

The arm of Me-te-a was so injured, the bone so shattered, that though the laceration healed perfectly, the bone never united; hence thereafter the forearm hung powerless and useless at his side.

He often afterward took pleasure in repeating the incident, and was ever ready to accord great praise to Major Mann for his activity and bravery. It was supposed if the men who were with Major Mann had been as quick and courageous as he, that Me-te-a would have paid with his life and scalp the penalty of attempting to carry out his ambushade.

He was a brave, generous and intelligent Indian, and described, by those who best knew him, as an orator, reasoner, and practical man. He evinced all these qualities at the treaties in which he took an active part. In addition he was vivacious and witty.

He lived in this region as is known from 1800 until 1827. He came to his death by poison, said to have been surreptitiously administered by some malevolent Indians who were unjustly incensed at him for his firm adherence to the terms of the Treaty of Paradise Springs in 1826. The Potawatomi had yielded a claim to a large body of lands in that and this region --which perhaps were based on an implied admission on the part of the Miamis, of a right in the Potawatomi growing out of the use of it for many years by the consent of the Miamis. The poison was said by some Indians to have been the root of a shrub with a red berry like the sumac--while others supposed it to have been the root of the May apple. The night before his death, he was discovered to have been so poisoned; and so deadly was the effect of it, that his tongue was swollen to such an extent that it protruded from his mouth and filled it so as to cause suffocation. Shortly after his death he was buried in a sand hill at the west end of Berry Street, overlooking the St. Mary's River--and which sand hill was until recently at full height, but now levelled. The remains of great numbers of Indians scattered wherever sand and debris has been needed to bring to grade low places, and over which handsome residences are built and happy domestic sports are held, regardless of the dead that "lie beneath, in dust and ashes."

Soon after this burial, Dr. Lewis G. Thompson, one of the then two and only physicians and surgeons of the place, desiring to learn if possible the identical cause of Me-te-a's death, in company with some other gentlemen of the place proceeded in the night to raise the body for dissection and examination of the stomach and lungs. At the very moment when Dr. Thompson had opened the chest of the dead Me-te-a, and thrown back his breast bone, a noise was heard. The company thought it to be Indians, and as they knew the savages were greatly hostile to such disinterments, they were at once panic stricken. Quickly blowing out their lights, they fled to



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the brush, to await the denouement. False as the alarm proved to be, they were nevertheless suspicious of the nearness of danger. So returning to the grave they reburied the body, and returned none wiser, leaving that body to rest and, forgetfulness by the march of civilization. In conclusion, there comes a musing spirit in regard to the Indians. Their day is past; their fires are out; the wild deer no longer bound before them; the plow is in their hunting grounds; the ax rings through the woods, once only familiar with the sharp crack of the rifle; the shrillness of the war-whoop is supplanted by the shriller whistle of the locomotive, and the canoe by the steamer or the sail vessel. Their springs are dry; civilization has consumed all these as fire devours flax. Truly, "Time destroys to renew, and desolates to improve."

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Tuesday, April 16, 1872

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Imprisonment for Debt--Jail Bounds--Appraisement Laws

By Hon. John W. Dawson

I do not doubt that there are many who will read this sketch, who will remember the time when in Indiana, there was a law, by which a debtor could be imprisoned for debt, on a *capias ad satisfaciendum* commonly called *ca. sa.*, and which, now so long out of use, I will give in substance as from a Justice of Wayne Township, that it may be better understood: State of Indiana, Allen County, Sct:

To any Constable of Wayne Township, Greeting:

(After reciting the time when, and the amount of the judgment and costs, before what magistrate, and who in favor of, and whom against, and that an execution had issued on the same, of such a date, against the goods and chattels of the defendant, in the proper county, and that it had been duly returned, no goods and chattels of the defendant found whereon to levy, and that the execution remained unsatisfied--the *ca. sa.* proceeded:)

"You are therefore commanded that you take the body of said Henry Reed, to satisfy said Charles Minnie, the debt aforesaid, together with interest and costs and accruing costs, and commit the said Henry Reed to the common jail of said county, there to be detained until said debt, interest and costs be paid and satisfied, or he be otherwise duly discharged. And of this writ make legal service and return. Given under my hand and seal this 3d day of July, 1833.

"Francis Comparet, J. P., (Seal.)"

On the receipt of such a writ, the constable arrested the defendant and committed him to jail, and if he were not able to pay for his keeping, the plaintiff became liable for the same. The jail had separate apartments for debtors and criminals--the former was called the debtor's cells, and the latter the criminal's cell or room.

Under this law the Circuit Court had the power to prescribe what was called "prison bounds," or "jail bounds," and I find on the Order Book of the Allen Circuit Court, for the November Term, 1833, Judge Gustavus S. Everett presiding, that his Honor fixed the jail bounds within a limit of six hundred yards in every direction from the County Jail (then on the southwest corner of the public square), and where that limit reached the St. Mary's or Maumee rivers, those streams within that distance were the "limits," and the County Surveyor was ordered to establish the "bounds." How the law was enforced against debtors in Allen County, those who don't otherwise know, may deduce from the following report of the Grand Jury, made at the August Term, of the Circuit Court, 1826, at which Honorable

April 16, 1872

Miles C. Eggleston presided, then resident of Madison, Indiana; Amos Lane, Prosecuting Attorney, then resident of Lawrenceburg, Dearborn County, Indiana:

#### REPORT OF THE GRAND JURY.

We, the Grand Jury, empaneled for the county of Allen, and State of Indiana, after examining the county jail, are of the opinion that the criminal rooms are not a place of safety for persons committed thereto; that the debtor's, or upper department of said jail, is not in a suitable condition for the reception of debtors, for want of locks, floor, and bedding.

John P. Hedges, Foreman.

August Term, Allen County, 1826.

"Without lock, stock or barrel," said Aunty Sanders, "that gun is dangerous." But Sam "couldn't see it," and without lock or floor a debtor's prison was most certainly not dangerous. This law of imprisonment for debt (without fraud first established) I know was rarely ever executed. In my memory I know but a single instance, and that was in 1831, in the town of Lawrenceburg, Dearborn County, while I was a schoolboy residing with Colonel John Spencer, my brother-in-law, then Sheriff and Jailor of that county. The "jail limits" were fixed to enable the debtor, on giving surety, to go from jail, but not beyond the "bounds," and if he did, the surety became liable for the judgment and costs on which he had been committed. This was in February 1838, amended, or rather a new one enacted by which the "prison bounds" were extended to the limits of the county, which was certainly quite a liberal "beat" for a debtor, either of the couldn't or wouldn't pay kind.

This law was a restraint on the man of small means, warning him not to go beyond his ability. It was a greater restraint on the dishonest class, at this day, most numerous, who find their way to their neighbor's goods or pockets and keep their gains, by beating the latter on execution, and exemption laws, which are very convenient for those men who are as ready to commit perjury as a toper is to tip off a tumbler of rum.

In the olden time of which I write, the exemption law allowed the head of the family, to claim free from execution as follows: "One Bible, one cow and calf, one bed and necessary bedding therefor, household and kitchen furniture not exceeding in value ten dollars, one chopping ax, one weeding hoe, one spinning wheel, and one reel, and necessary provisions to supply the family two months." The whole sum not to exceed \$50. How changed, now \$300.

The imprisonment clause was rarely resorted to; and though it may have been occasionally used as an engine to oppress the honestly poor man, the oppression in that direction did not approximate the injury which unscrupulous debtors did to credulous creditors when they overreached either by their protestations of honesty or by their deceitful appeals, aid in pretended extremity. Possibly there may have been cases in the county and elsewhere, of hardship under the law, but I have never learned of such. I, however, have known a thousand cases where debtors have been so criminally derelict that such a law would seem to have been the sine qua non.

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However imperative and dead was this law by reason on nonenforcement of the imprisonment clause, it was eagerly seized on by those who were too poor to get trusted for even a farthing, as well as those who by fraud subsisted on the earnings of others. Politicians, snuffing the breeze, made it a hobby and it was repealed in January, 1842, I think.

Another law soon followed which was of the same piece! Magistrates before this had jurisdiction of the persons to summon any creditor from any part of the county in any action of debt not exceeding \$100 and costs. But this was also regarded as oppressive. A clamor was also raised against it, and the merchant or trader who, at Fort Wayne, sold goods to a farmer in Perry Township, was compelled to go there to sue him. If he were a non-resident of the county, then the township law did not prevail. But this, too, was repealed; and any resident of the state could and can, when sued out of the township of his residence, plead the matter in abatement and defeat the suit.

The popularity of this township law was such, that any man who was thought to oppose it, suffered in public estimation. I recollect that in 1842, at a special election, Thomas Johnson, Esq., a gentleman of elegance and merit, was defeated for the Legislature from Allen County, owing to an unfounded report set afloat that he was against it.

Existing with this law was the appraisement law of February 1841, making it obligatory on sheriffs, and constables, to appraise all property levied on and when offered at sale unless it brought way two-thirds of the appraised value, it should not be struck off, but the officer was required to return the writ, reciting that it was not sold, because no one bid the requisite amount. This was made to relieve against the financial embarrassment which had come upon the country, to save men who were in debt from being rendered wholly bankrupt by execution plaintiffs, who might, for a nominal bid, under the old law, take a farm a hundred times in excess of their claims, because there was no surplus money to buy with. This law, however, was in 1844 decided by the Supreme Court of the United States to be unconstitutional, so far as was intended to affect contracts existing when it was passed, but constitutional and valid as to all subsequent contracts, and that the judgment plaintiff had a right to the benefits of the law regulating the remedy for collection existing at the time his contract was made. The case went up, on a certificate of division of the Judges of the Circuit Court of the United States for Illinois, on a similar question, arising under a like law of Illinois--the case of Hayward vs. McCracken, as I quote from memory. Out of these have grown our present appraisement laws, and that authorizing the maker of a note or contract to waive in writing the benefit of that appraisement, on execution of property by distress and sale.

I have thus given the history of legislation on these matters, to show the reader that reform and progression are not synonymous, and I close the sketch with a few thoughts of my own on the subject matter. When the question of abolishing imprisonment for debt was up for discussion, I confess that I imagined the old law a cruel one, although I had seen no evi-

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dences of its hardship, in application. But since that time, I have seen so many thousand cases where it was as hard to distinguish between the intent and circumstance of obtaining the goods of another forming the contract, and obtaining the goods of another forming the contract, and obtaining goods under false pretense, as it is to tell the point d' appui, where one color of a rainbow ends and another begins. I say I have seen so many such cases, partaking quite as much of crime as of contract, that my confidence in my early convictions in regard to imprisonment for debt, in some cases are shaken. Indeed, my experience has satisfied me that legislation has run, not to protect men of property, so much as to propitiate the insolvent. Plaintiffs in civil cases are put to a disadvantage in court, just as the State of Indiana is in criminal cases. Defendants in both cases have the advantage, by reason of legislation, and Judges and officers are often blamed for what is the fault of law-makers. But most people do not distinguish. Some of these measures were, without doubt, proper and necessary in their day; but as in those cases the reason for this enactment has ceased, the law ought to be altogether to suit the existing condition of men and things to meet the evasions and abuses which experience has shown have been practiced. Trade and wholesome business enterprises which have been crippled, and in some instances nearly checked, by imprudent legislation, would at once go forward with an elastic bound.



CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Monday, April 22, 1872

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An Indian Murder--A Miami Kills an Ottawa, 1824--  
Oqua-nox-as, and Ottawa Chief, Demands Reparation

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

It was a custom among the Indians of this region, which attained as early as the year 1800, to assemble annually at Fort Wayne, to receive the annuities which, under prior treaties, the United States had stipulated to pay them. As the autumn was a more propitious season of the year for that purpose, large bodies of the various tribes inhabiting this part of Indiana and Northern Ohio, were congregated here 1824. The various bands had taken up quarters as convenience suited in the neighborhood most convenient to water, and other advantages, which their necessities and roving habits required. These occasions were great epochs in the history of Indian life, and served them to date the passing of time. Besides serving to bring these savages together to exchange the civilities of such a life, it enabled them to procure whisky, which, though the bane of their life, was purchased at any price which the seller might have the temerity to ask. On this occasion, while on a drunken frolic, one of Raccoon's party--a Miami--deliberately stabbed and killed a young Ottawa Indian. As soon as his victim fell, the Miami gave a loud whoop, and setting himself down by a tree, brandished his long knife, and invited in a defiant tone, any one to come and kill him who might desire to do so. This was designed to bring others into collision with him, and in that state of desperation he would have killed or been killed. The Ottawas were greatly enraged at this, and spread the news through the camps of all their tribe, located on the waters of the Auglaize and Flat Rock. They left their hunting grounds represented by several hundred warriors, under their war chief Oquanoxas, (pronounced Oc-a-nox-y,) and advanced in the direction of Fort Wayne, to demand reparation in money of the Miamis for the killing of the young man, or in default to settle it by resort to arms. This is with Indians, as it was with our Anglo-Saxon ancestors long ago, and the custom was not abandoned till the night of barbarism had long passed. The Indians would first require compensation, and that being awarded, the outrage was cancelled, just as one punishment expiates a violated law at this day. These warriors having ended their march, pitched their camps on the south bank of the Maumee, just below the point which I now designate as the first lock on the Wabash and Erie Canal east of this city, and tarried there for the night. On the morning following, Oquanoxas and a few of his warriors came to the village (now city) of Fort Wayne. They sought and obtained a conference with the Miamis, through their great Chief John B. Richardville, whose Indian name



April 22, 1872

was Pe-she-wa, or Wild Cat. They demanded of Pe-she-wa \$5,000, in silver, and unless promptly adjusted, they asserted that they would immediately attack the Miamis. This greatly alarmed Richardville, who saw the unprepared condition of the Miamis from a sudden attack from the Ottawas, and he set himself to work at the earliest moment to prevent a collision which would, as it seemed to him result in so much bloodshed and cruelty. His first step was to call a council of his head-men and sub-chiefs, such as could be apprised by speedy notice. In the council they resolved that they would allow the \$5,000, out of the next annuity due the Miamis. It should be paid the Ottawas by the Indian agent. This the Ottawas accepted, and by a contemporaneous sub-agreement between the parties, the late Judge Samuel Hanna and Captain James Barnett delivered to the Ottawas goods to the amount of \$5,000. They took from Richardville and his head-men, a guarantee that that sum should be retained for them out of the Miami annuity, and it was accordingly done.

This adjustment put an end to this fearful excitement which prevailed among the whites, created by the fear that Oquanoxas, who was noted for his bravery and impulsiveness would begin a bloody war on the Miamis. This fear may be justly measured, when it is known that there was no military force nearer than Newport, Kentucky. Before relief could come from that place, extermination would have been the fate of the one or the other, and that, in the blind and bloody carnage, many whites in villages and in feeble settlements, would have suffered death or pillage.

It is said by those who knew Richardville, the Chief, intimately, that he evinced unusual fear lest he should fail in his effort to placate the Ottawas--and be compelled to defend against the bloody attack which they threatened.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Thursday, April 25, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

The First Marriage in Fort Wayne--Doctor Edwards  
to Miss Hunt, 1803

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

The announcement of marriages are now so common in Fort Wayne that they excite interest only when the parties or perhaps one of them, are wealthy or connected with wealthy families. This only excites interest when the ceremony is imposing or the parties make it so by extravagant cards and more extravagant dress, or when the newspaper, now the educator of the people, comes to their relief. But the marriage of Dr. Edwards to Miss Hunt, 1803, nearly three score and ten years gone by--the first that ever was celebrated at this place by persons of our own race, make it, at this day, a matter of interest to all. I have therefore chosen it as the subject of a sketch.

The bride was the daughter of Colonel Thomas Hunt who served under General Wayne at the storming of Stony Point, during the Revolutionary War and father of General John E. Hunt, long resident of Maumee City, once Postmaster of Toledo, and brother-in-law of General Lewis Cass. He (Col. Hunt) also served under General Wayne in his expedition against the Indians on the Maumee River, and was afterwards promoted and left in command of Fort Defiance for about eighteen months, and was from thence ordered to Fort Wayne.

While here he obtained a furlough and in 1797 brought his family from Boston to this place, where his son General John E. Hunt was born, April, 1798. Here he remained until the death of Colonel Hamtramck (who built the Fort) which occurred about the year 1799, upon which Hunt was promoted to the Colonelcy of the old 1st Regiment, and ordered from Fort Wayne to Detroit. There he remained until 1803, and then was ordered with his regiment to Bellefontaine, Missouri, a small military station a few miles above St. Louis, on the Mississippi River. There he commanded until his death in 1807.

When he was on his way from Detroit to Bellefontaine, with his regiment coming up the Maumee River with fifty Montreal batteaux, and when he was nearing the landing at Fort Wayne, the commanding officer, Captain Whipple, was standing beside the Surgeon's mate, Dr. Edwards when the latter remarked to him, "Cap Whipple, that is a fine looking girl," pointing to a daughter of Colonel Hunt, then with the family on a boat and about to land. It seemed that the daughter at the same time saw Dr. Edwards and remarked to her mother that, "That is a good looking young man."

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. . . 1803 marriage of Dr. Edwards & Miss Hunt . . .

April 25, 1872

Suffice it to say that here, in an Indian country, at a rude military post, with no etiquette other than that of elegance which the punctilio of a soldierly life demands and enforces, and with no society other than that a few officers and soldiers formed, these two young people formed and matured an attachment in less than a fortnight, which in that time resulted in their marriage. This event was celebrated, perhaps, by the chaplain of the post--if not, then by a civil contract between them by the solemn recognition of the relation of husband and wife. The most distinguished guest at this wedding was Five Medals, a Potawatomi chief, whose village was then on Elkhart prairie, now in Elkhart County. This Indian was there by his own solicitation, to gratify his curiosity to see a marriage in civilized life--so strangely in contrast with the purchase of a wife among his own savage race. It was said that he exhibited great pleasure in witnessing it.

The happy couple soon left on their bridal tour for Bellefontaine, and this hurried courtship and marriage, I am credibly informed, resulted in great happiness. Time wore on. The renowned victories of peace came. Dr. Edwards and his early and excellent sweetheart and wife, exchanged military life for that of civil, and the last I heard of them they were living in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in the full fruition of the delights of their fortuitous meeting and romantic love and marriage . . .

Indiana had but two years before this marriage been organized as Indiana Territory, and hence there was really no civil jurisdiction exercised here at Fort Wayne at the period of which I write, (1803). This really remained so for many years thereafter. This place was conceded to be in Knox County, the seat of Justice of which was at Vincennes, then the seat of this Territorial Government and in fact so remained until many years later. Even in 1816 when an election was held for the election of delegates to form a State Constitution by a Convention at Corydon, Harrison County, this place was represented therein by John Badolett, John Benefiel, John Johnson, William Polk (who was Receiver of Public Moneys at this place under President Harrison, and died here), and Benjamin Parke. So late, even, as 1816, it was not known by the residents here, in what county Fort Wayne really was, so that Captain James W. Hackley, whom I have heretofore noticed, desiring to marry Rebecca Wells, half-Indian daughter of Captain William Wells, sent to Piqua, Ohio, for a Justice of the Peace, and they were married by him.

CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Saturday, April 27, 1827

Page 3, Col. 5-6

Incidents in the Life of Judge William Polk

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

In my sketch of the 24th, the name of William Polk was incidentally alluded to, as one of the pioneers of this place, and a statement made that he was appointed Receiver of Public Moneys at this place, which being wrong, I correct it by saying, that it should have read that he was appointed Register of the Land Office for the Fort Wayne Land District.

With this correction, it is proposed to make Judge Polk\* the subject of a brief sketch. The living owe it to their distinguished dead to perpetuate their memories, and the interest in such increases as passing time extends the period between the transpired event and the present.

William Polk having figured so conspicuously in early times, it is peculiarly appropriate to notice him while passing in review the events of the past of this place.

He was a native of Virginia, born in 1775, and at seven years of age moved with his father's family to Nelson County, Kentucky. The country then was not emerged from the dangers of savage barbarity and warfare. In a very few years after his advent there, he and his mother and three sisters were taken prisoners by the Indians, deprived of nearly all their clothing which their captors burned, and in the exposed and destitute condition were conveyed through the wilderness to Detroit. There they remained about one year, and were then, through the interposition of friends, released and returned to their home in Kentucky. The outrageous treatment which they had in the beginning of their captivity received from the Indians incited young Polk to avenge it. At the age of nineteen he enlisted in the army commanded by General Wayne, and proceeded through Northwestern Ohio, via Fort Defiance, with that army, and was present at the location of the place where General Wayne ordered Colonel Hamtramck to erect a fort on September 18, 1794.

While here he received an injury from a fall which disabled him for some time. He, however, returned to Kentucky and there remained until about 1808, and then removed to Vincennes, then in Indiana Territory (Knox Co.), where he was again exposed to the dangers incident to frontier life. The Indians were now making depredations on defenseless settlers, in violation of their treaty of friendship concluded at Greenville, in 1795--incited by Tecumseh. Judge Polk felt again called on to enlist, and did so under General Harrison, who marched from Harrison (near Terre Haute) up the Wabash. On November 7, 1811, he encountered the combined Indian forces at Tippecanoe, and though victorious, suffered terrible loss. At this battle



April 27, 1872

Judge Polk was wounded.

He was a member of the Constitutional Convention which framed the first State constitution in 1816--representing, with others named in the preceding sketch, this region then in Knox County. He was often after a Representative in the State Legislature--was in 1830 appointed Commissioner of Michigan road, (a great thoroughfare constructed by the State, beginning at Michigan City and passing Plymouth, Rochester, Logansport, to Indianapolis, and then by Shelbyville, Greensburg, Napoleon, and to Madison, on the Ohio River), a trust which he performed efficiently and honestly. Those now living, who in a early day had occasion to pass the Michigan pioneer, recall him as a hospitable host at the crossing of Tippecanoe River in Fulton County.

On the election and inauguration of General Harrison as President of the United States, that illustrious patriot remembered the brave Polk, his former companion in arms, then in his 66th year, and appointed him Register of the Land Office at this place--a position which perhaps was then worth a salary of \$500, and prerequisites another \$500, on which he subsisted until April 20, 1843, when he died, and was buried by our citizens with the honors of war.

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\*Judge Polk, while living here, called on the venerable Mrs. Laura Suttentfield, and invited her to accompany him, and he would show her within a few feet of where General Wayne struck his sword and ordered Colonel Hamtramck to place the flagpole and build a fort around it, as he did. This point Judge Polk designated about the centre of Main Street, a hundred feet west of where the west line of the Fort-lot now strikes the street. This, perhaps, will settle a disputed point, as nearly as it is possible to do now.



CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Tuesday, April 30, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

Recollections of Counselor Cooper

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

I have no means in my power to derive minute information relative to the early life of Henry Cooper, Esq., deceased. What was once familiar in regard to the scenes of his boyhood and early manhood, as often related to me, have, owing to the faithlessness of human memory, been forgotten, hence the reader must be satisfied with a leaf from memory, which is here and there left in my mind.

Mr. Cooper was a native of Maryland. He early chose a sea-faring life, during which service he visited many parts of the world--as I have often heard him relate. Whether by nature or habit acquired, I know not, but in him were combined as much courage and as tender feelings as in any other man I ever knew. Those of us who used to travel with him through this Judicial Circuit, as well as they who so often journeyed with him from here to Indianapolis to attend the Supreme Court of Indiana, and the Circuit and District Federal Courts, also held there, well know, and can verify what I say in regard to his courage and benevolence. So remarkable was he in the latter quality, that whatever was pathetic in the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or whatever was calculated to appeal to the finer feelings of gentlemen of the bar, were sure to suffuse the eyes of Mr. Cooper with tears, and break down his voice from the deep emotions that were excited within his great rugged, but noble breast. One might, now and then, begin a smile at this weakness, but so purely and so heartfelt and unaffected his utterances, that we all, from grave to gay, found ourselves of a sudden drying our eyes and hushing the tremendous emotions which stole into our breasts ere we were aware.

When he came here, I do not know but it was at a very early day. He was occupied as a schoolteacher a part of the time--at one time in that capacity he presided over a school in the old county jail. He was admitted to the bar to practice as an attorney and counselor at law at the second term of the Allen Circuit Court begun and held on June 6, 1825 at the house of Alexander Ewing--which court was presided over by Honorable Bethuel F. Morris--Judge Samuel Hanna, Associate. I think he had lived some time prior to his advent here, in Kentucky, and it was while there perhaps, he became acquainted with Miss Mary, daughter of Judge Silver, of North Bend, Ohio, and whom he afterwards married. On reaching here he seemed to have two warrants for the location of lands, commonly called "Canadian Warrants." The owner had agreed with Mr. Cooper, that he would give him one for locating the other. He did this and located his own on a quar-

ter section just west, half of a mile, from where New Haven is, in this county--the farm now owned by Mr. Beugnot. There he began to make an improvement at a very early day. By the aid of borrowed books, which he read by night fires kindled by brush and logs, he acquired much of that legal knowledge for which he was in later years justly celebrated. His industry and proverbial honesty, added to his professional qualifications soon brought him a lucrative practice. From this he was able to purchase valuable property, the rise in the value of which, in a few years placed him in good circumstances. With the Judges and officers of court in this region and with the members of the Bar, he stood high and was justly entitled to be called "Father of the Bar" of Fort Wayne, and it was cheerfully accorded to him. He was most remarkable for the fullness of his knowledge of the law, precedents and judicial decisions. He could call from his memory the general law on almost any subject--and refer to the current of authorities wherein a given case had to be adjudicated. Nevertheless, he did seem to lack the faculty to make such discriminations between the case before him and the one decided in the books as was equal to his reputation and professional standing.

His domestic habits were of the purest order . . . his home was a paradise which anyone might envy. His wife and three children were idolized; but in April 1815 she died, and then came days of woe, which I saw with sorrowing heart and tearful eyes; and which I omit further noticing. Many jokes are told of him, and, indeed, he was fond of one whether he or another was the subject. A joke was played on him on the occasion of a party of lawyers leaving here on horseback for the Supreme Court at Indianapolis. It was arranged that all should start together, but Mr. Cooper was slow, and the rest of the company started ahead. On reaching the forks where the Indianapolis road leaves the now gravel road, they conceived a joke to play on Mr. Cooper. They requested every teamster or traveler whom they might meet going into Wayne, to tell the old gentleman, whom they would meet, riding a sorrel horse and wearing a drab greatcoat, that they, the gentlemen ahead, had requested that he should be informed that they had found his tar bucket! This acted like a charm. It was told to Mr. Cooper so often by travelers meeting him, that when he saw any one approaching he would spur up "Old Charley" and give no opportunity for a further repetition of the joke. How he treated the "boys" when he caught up with them, will be well imagined by those who know him, and who yet live. I, however, will not attempt a description.

The political campaign of 1840, between General Harrison and President Van Buren, was perhaps the most hotly contested one that the country ever witnessed, and caused great mortification to the Democrats here and elsewhere, when it was known that General Harrison was elected. Mr. Cooper, being an ardent Whig and a friend of General Harrison, and his wife, a distant relative of Mrs. Harrison, felt great joy at the result. In this mood, on a certain sunny day, soon after the result of the election was known, he was seen passing our principal streets carrying a lighted lantern and looking carefully into the by-places as he went along. This conduct

called out the inquiry as to what he meant by it. He replied: "I am hunting for a Democrat." The joke was well enjoyed by all, Whigs and Democrats. Since that period, Whigs and Democrats alike have witnessed defeat. Whigs, strange to say, have mostly adopted views on slavery which were invariably then disclaimed by their leaders. They have gradually been committed to arbitrary measures and constitutional interpretations which would have made ship-wreck of the party had it dared to avow them then. But lest some over-zealous Republican friend of mine may take issue with this assertion, I will introduce the platform of principles adopted at Baltimore, May 1, 1844, and on which Henry Clay was nominated for President. Once a Whig, I know whereof I speak, and my "Charcoal Sketches" will not be marred by this bit of history.

### WHIG PRINCIPLES

1. An honest and economical administration of the Government.
2. A sound currency, of uniform value.
3. Fair and moderate, but certain and stable encouragement to all branches of industry.
4. Peace and union; peace as long as it can be preserved with honor; preparation for vigorous war when it is inevitable; union at all hazards.
5. Men only of character, fidelity and ability appointed to public office.
6. Just limitations and restraints upon the Executive power.
7. A distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands among all the States, on just and liberal terms.
8. A just administration of our common Constitution, without any addition to, or abstraction from, the powers which it fairly confers, by forced interpretation.
9. The preservation exclusively by the States of their local and peculiar institutions.

On every living principle of that platform every Old Whig of the Clay and Webster school ought this day to stand. I may say that the 7th text is out of existence, but the rest are what every Democrat in the land, avows in opposition to General Grant's administration policy--and is the very sentiment which on May 1, 1872, will be avowed in Convention at Cincinnati, Ohio, by the Liberal Republicans of the whole nation in protestation of the misrule and threatened despotism of President Grant and his dangerous advisers and dependents, and with a like declaration of principles every Democrat in the land ought to be, and I hope is, in accord.

Turning now to Mr. Cooper: I said in outset--that he was brave, and so he was. Caesar was no braver. On a cold Saturday afternoon in April 1743, Mr. Cooper, David H. Colerick, Esq., and myself after the adjournment of the Spring Term of the Noble Circuit Court, held at Augusta--where I a few weeks before had located in the practice of the law--started from Augusta all bound to Fort Wayne. Our afternoon repast was

light, our whisky not plenty nor good. Mr. Cooper had his sorrel horse "Charley" that was brave and strong enough for any occasion. Mr. Colerick was riding his excelsior roan "Charley," and I on a poor old gray, borrowed of that celebrity of Augusta, Charles D. Shearer. The roads were bad, winds high, and evening cold. I, from necessity, had a rear position, and hence could see my companions in danger. The road was new, and the wind drove the decaying bark in loads from the trees. Cooper would rarely dodge, but Colerick seemed to have not as much liking for such things as his "Charley," and would now and then dodge as quick as a bird, while I was unobserved, but not a little concerned. It was dark before we reached Heller's Corners, and time hung heavily, from cold, fatigue and hunger. Our great anxiety was, how to cross the St. Mary's, then near midnight. We reached the river at the foot of Calhoun Street. We found when we got to the south end a deep sheet of water from there to where the County Jail stands. The embankment was narrow and the water of doubtful depth. Above, below, and around was a sheet of swift water. Danger, it seemed, was just ahead. We held a breathless parley in pantomime. Cooper soon spurred "Charley" into the flood. Colerick's "Charley" advanced breast-deep, and instinctively turned back; but, as of a second thought, turned and followed Cooper. My gray followed the roan, and there we were. Though I had no children nor wife to mourn my death, as they had, I felt that there would be a funeral transpire in this city very soon. Cooper seemed to rely on "Charley's" power, and when Colerick limbered his legs up along the back of his "Charley," I supposed he felt that it was no time to swap horses while crossing a stream. I could rely nothing on my horse, if he should get below the road, and felt that my only safety was in my warm blood and strong young limbs, and resolved to make the best of what God had blessed me with. But the two Charley's and Gray proved equal to the occasion, and bore their grateful riders to the safe side of Jordan. As soon as terre firma was reached Mr. Colerick ejaculated thanks for deliverance. Cooper laughed at his implied fear--put spurs to Charley, and soon we were in the city--and parted hoping no more to be compelled to imperil our lives in that manner. It was perhaps the last.

In a few months I left my practice in Noble County, and returned here, and was the daily companion of Mr. Cooper till 1848, when ill health compelled me to quit the place . . .

On the morning of March 26, 1853, he died. On the same day at a meeting of the Bar of the place, appropriate resolutions were passed and ordered to be spread on the order books of the Circuit and Common Pleas Court, but I regret to say that this was omitted.

In conclusion I may say that if all the members of the Bar of this region who knew Henry Cooper, were consulted, and they who are dead could speak, and they should direct me to write on his humble gravestone, it would be contained in these words:

"HERE LIES AN HONEST MAN."



CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Monday, May 6, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

The Names of Our Rivers and Creeks  
--Their Origin and Meaning

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

The title of my Charcoal Sketch for today was suggested by a perversion of a name which appears on the old Allen County map, published in 1860, by R. J. Skinner Middleton Strobbridge & Company, and intended to designate a creek which takes its rise in Springfield Township and flows in a southeasterly direction through the south half of Scipio Township, across the line between Indiana and Ohio, and into the Maumee River in the neighborhood of Antwerp, though on the opposite side of the river. On the map it is written in plain letters "Mary Delome," and this name may serve the purpose of recognition, as well as any, but it is always best to preserve names in their purity, that ultimate confusion may be avoided. To this end I will make the proper correction of the perverted name of the stream. The respective names of our rivers, creeks and prairies were given principally by the French explorers, at so very early a day only a faint gleam is left in the tradition that no written record is extant, and hence of the times. The imperfect record of the time so long gone by having been lost, I meet with the same difficulty that historians and antiquarians, and even translators, have met whenever they have attempted to present to the living present the truth of bygone years.

These French explorers attempted always to give names to streams, to places and natural aspect of which was novel or distinguished, and to villages, settlements and prairies, which had an appropriate signification. Hence, the creek known on the map of Allen County, as Mary Delome was distinguished for its marshy character; and as the elm tree was by far the most abundant of the woody growth, on it, the French gave it its appropriate and significant appellation--Marais, meaning a swamp, and de Lorme Elm, and therefore when written in one term, is Marais de Lorme, or Elm Swamp Creek. This should be corrected on future maps, and the proper names re-established in common use.

As a matter of history, it is quite in place to give a name to another stream, or rather revive an old and nearly forgotten name of the creek which the traveler will cross as he shall pass over the road from this city to Huntington on the south side of Little River and its marsh, on the farm of Mr. Horney Robinson, a pioneer whom I have known to reside there for over thirty-four years, in Section 36, Township 30, Range 11. This creek was in early day regarded as a place of safety for the neighboring Indians to which they sent their women and children when they went to war with

May 6, 1872

other tribes. Therefore, the Canadian French, who from time immemorial mingled largely with the Indians, gave this creek the name, La Coulee des Enfants, the run or creek of the children; or to render it into more acceptable English, it may be written Children's Creek. The creek beyond that on this same road is properly called Langlois Creek, from Peter Langlois, a Frenchman, who early lived among the Miami Indians, was adopted by, and married among them, and who was, in 1861, still living, a resident of Tippecanoe County, Indiana. He received his annuity from my hands when in that year I was Special Agent, appointed by the United States to pay the Miamis, who were resident in Indiana and Michigan, and who were exempt by the last Treaty of the Miamis from removal to Kansas.

Merriam's Creek, which takes its rise in the west part of Marion Township, and empties into the St. Mary's River in Section Six of that Township (29. 13), took its name from that of a pioneer, Adolphus Merriam. He settled on that stream and entered the land at its mouth. He died at an early day. I find that on November 24, 1825, Judges Hanna and Cushman (associates) confirmed the letters testamentary which had in vacation of the Allen Circuit Court been granted by the Clerk. As a matter of history, this was the first judicial exercise of probate power in Allen County, and this Court continued to exercise such power in Allen County until late 1829. Then the powers were transferred to a created Probate Court, and William G. Ewing commissioned seven years from September 10, 1829, and was succeeded by Hugh McCulloch, June 20, 1834--hence the origin of their respective titles as Judge.

The name Aboite applied to the creek and township of that name. The stream takes its rise in Lake Township, and runs south through Aboite and enters Little River at the Northwest corner of township 29, range 11 Lafayette. Aboite is an ancient name, and its origin is obscure. It was on this stream that La Balme--a native of France, was defeated in 1780 in making an attempt from Kaskaskia, (Ill.), against the British post at Detroit. He went from Kaskaskia to Vincennes, was joined by a small reinforcement, and then moved up the Wabash. He directed his efforts to reduce a British trading post, then standing at the head of the Maumee (Fort Wayne). He plundered the traders and some half-breed Indians, and returned from the post and encamped on Aboite. The Miamis attacked him that night, a few of La Balme's men were killed; others escaped, and the expedition failed. This is the first mention I can find of the stream, but its name in that form has remained unchanged. The oldest French here give me to understand that as it was a muddy, stagnant, miry and filthy creek, it was called Aboite, because of its sloppiness. This seems to be the best evidence of the origin of its name. However, on enquiry I find in the French idiom no word like this, signifying sloppiness. But there is another hypothesis which seems to imply something of the same nature when fully considered. As it was a sloppy and miry place, and its crossing considered dangerous and deathly, it might have been regarded, figuratively, as a river, to cross which was certain death--no retreat therefrom--the very point where life would end, and death begin. The traveler reaching and



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entering into such a stream, would be understood, in French parlance, to be aux abois, like lawyers say of a man just at the point of death, in extremis, or perhaps, as medical men say in articulo, that is, gone to that point between life and death from which there is no retreat or recovery. Taking these two suppositions, we can readily see how this muddy and unsafe stream might originally have been called the Aux Abois, afterwards the prefix suppressed, and finally razed until by long use it became Aboite.

With these reflections I, for the present, leave the subjects named in the caption of this sketch, promising to pursue the investigation as to other rivers and places in the county, at an early period.

## CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT WAYNE

## DAILY SENTINEL

Fort Wayne, Monday, May 20, 1872

Page 3, Col. 5-6

Marais de Peage, Commonly Called Prairie du Parsh,  
in Aboite Township

By Hon. J. W. Dawson

Those who have lived here for thirty years, and even many of later residence hereabouts, are familiar with the name of "Prairie du Parsh," a small stream, two branches of which are crossed by the Huntington State Road, on the Southeast quarter of Section 13, Congressional Township 30, N. Range 11, E., or Civil Township, Aboite, now the farm of George Bullard, about four miles southwest of Wayne. This name is more commonly applied to the marsh which the little streams drain. Both marsh and streams were in an early day, and even now, so swampy and marshy as to nearly forbid a passage across. Like nearly all French and Indian names originally given streams and places, the name has been so corrupted as to defy, without investigation, any correct knowledge of the meaning. In fact, scarcely any two persons use the same name to designate it. It is, therefore my purpose to clear away the debris, so as to discover to the public not only the true original name, but to give the signification of the words which constitute it, in order that it may go accurately into history.

The French very early made use of the Maumee River to this place, then found in the possession of the Miami Indians, to transport their goods, etc., then by the portage or carrying place from the St. Mary's across the land to the first navigable point on the Little Wabash, or Little River, and so on, by boat down the Wabash to the Ohio River. In 1734, Captain M. De Vincennes, of the French army, came up to this place, then called, in the Miami dialect, Ke-ki-ogue, and found it in possession of the Miamis. It was regarded as "the key of the whole country below." He then descended the Wabash to the very mouth of the Wea Creek, a few miles below where Lafayette now stands. There he established a post, and called it Ouitanon, and then to a place called Chippe-Cake (or Brushwood town), and there he built a fort, which was called Vincennes.

At the great treaty held at Greenville, Ohio, in August, 1795, Little Turtle, the great chief of the Miamis, called this place (now Fort Wayne), where were located the Miami villages, "that glorious gate through which all the good words of our chiefs had to pass, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west." It was the great trading point between Detroit and Vincennes. All the goods sold to the Indians on the Wabash and at Vincennes had to pass through this "key to the whole country below," this "glorious gate." All the furs and peltries bought of the Indians had to be returned through this "gate." So profitable was this trade, that at the

May 20, 1872

Treaty of Greenville, when General Wayne requested the Indians to cede to the United States six miles square of land at Fort Wayne, and two miles square at the west end of the portage on Little River, about eight miles southwest of this, on now Section 26, Aboite Township, the whole tribe of Miamis objected. Through their chief, Little Turtle, who, addressing General Wayne said: "Elder Brother: I now give you the true sentiments of your younger brothers, the Miamis, with respect to the reservation at the Miami villages. We thank you kindly for contracting the limits you at first proposed. We wish you to take this six miles square on the side of the river (Maumee) where your fort now stands, as your younger brothers, wish to inhabit that beloved spot again.\* You shall cut hay whenever you please, and you shall never require in vain the assistance of your younger brothers at that place. Elder Brother: The next place you pointed to was the Little River, and said you wanted two miles square at that place. This is a request that our fathers, the French and British, never made us. It was always ours. This carrying place (portage) has heretofore proved, in a great degree, the subsistence of our younger brothers. That place has brought to us, in the course of one day the amount of one hundred dollars. Let us both own this place, and enjoy in common the advantages it affords."

General Wayne replied in substance that he had traced the lines of two forts which the French had once possessed here--one on the St. Joseph, near the junction, and one on the St. Mary's not far off,\*\* and that it was an established rule among European nations to reserve as much land around their forts as their cannon could command. And as to the portage between Fort Wayne and Little River, and the fact that it had produced the Miamis one hundred dollars revenue per day, he remarked that though the French paid the tax or tariff for the use of the portage, yet in the end the Indians who bought the French goods had to pay it. As the United States would always be the carriers between their different posts, he enquired why they should pay annually \$8,000 if they were not to enjoy the privileges of open roads to and from their reservations--a sum which the United States agreed to pay for this and other considerations, and that the Miamis' share of this was \$1,000, annually. The claim to six mile square at or near the confluence of the rivers St. Joseph and St. Mary's where Fort Wayne now stands, or near it and two miles square in the Wabash, at the end of the portage from the Miami to the Lake, and about eight miles westward from Fort Wayne, was assented to by the Indians. These reservations gave complete control to the United States of the "glorious gate," "the key to the whole country below." From that day the portage ceased to be a toll-road or turnpike.

Now here comes the origin of the word which has been corrupted into Prairie de Pash, or Prairie du Parsh.

In the French tongue, Peage, pronounced Pa-azh, means toll, tax, as collecting toll at a toll gate, and sometimes used for road, turnpike, etc. A marsh is called Marais, or as near as I can pronounce it on paper, "Ma-rah"--the first syllable is pronounced ma, as the a in marry, and the second a as in rank; the whole with accent on the last syllable Marais de

May 20, 1872

Peage or the turnpike or toll-road swamp, or the turnpike marsh.

I have been thus particular to give the early history of the portage, and that it was a toll-road for revenue purposes to the Indians, in order to bring out from its corruption the name of Marais de Peage. The portage line may be seen marked with much accuracy on the map of Allen County, lately published by Henry J. Rudisill, Esq., Auditor of the county. As for the accuracy of which map I can vouch, and a copy of which every intelligent gentleman of the county should have.

From the date of the ratification of the treaty, the portage which crossed this marsh between the present traveled road and the Wabash & Erie Canal, ceased to be a toll-road, and yet the marsh will be known by its original name in history now recorded.

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\*The "beloved spot" named by Little Turtle was the old Omee, or Miami villages which then stood along the East bank of the St. Joseph, from its confluence extending nearly half a mile, and across the Maumee, where Wagner's Fort then stood, and which he had built but the year previous.

\*\*This was located in the bend of the St. Mary's, south side, about where the estate and residence of Honorable Hugh McCulloch are situated.













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CHARCOAL SKETCHES OF OLD TIMES IN FORT W



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